INTERVIEW

JACK MILLER

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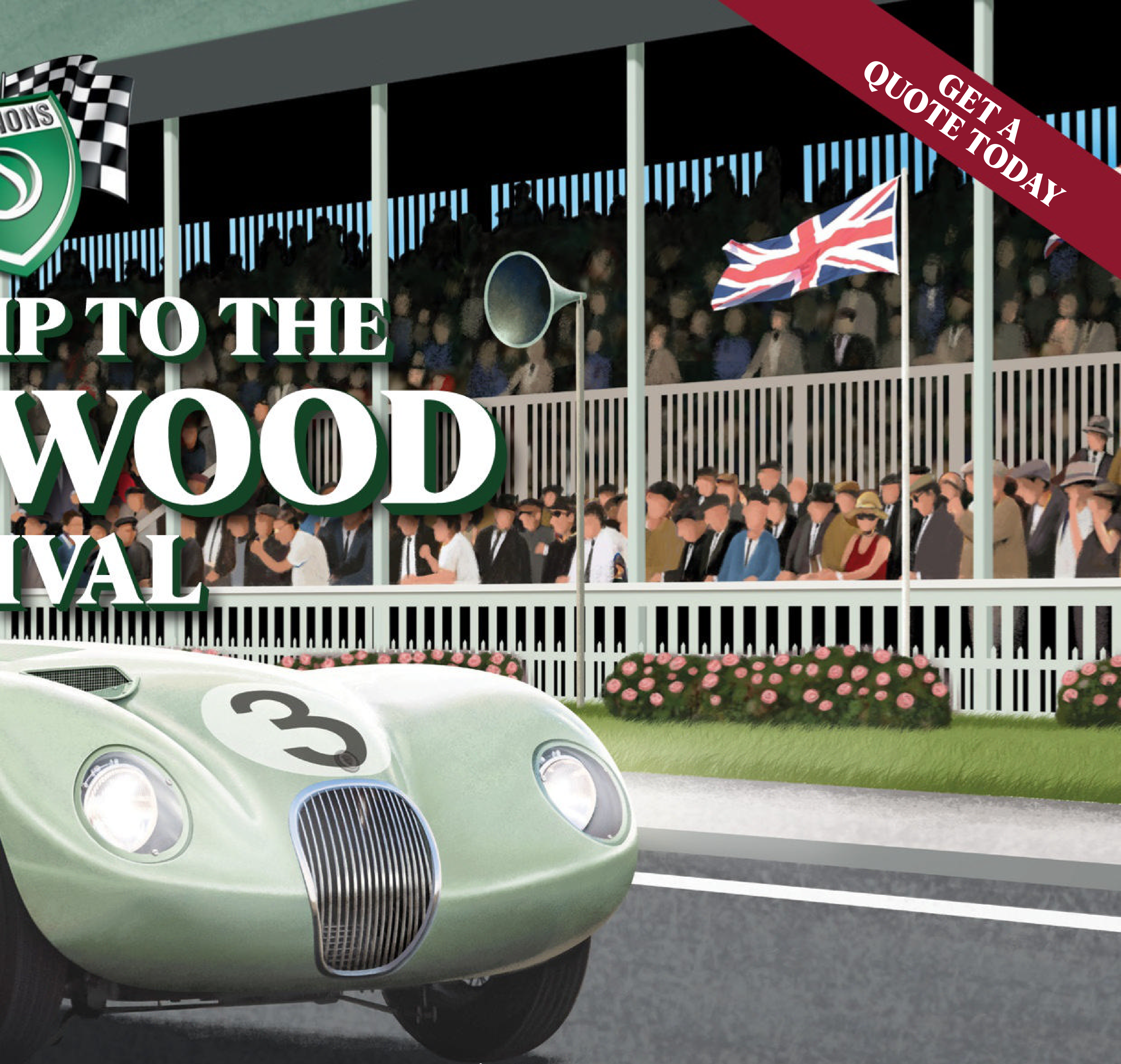

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CONTENTS.

THIS IS WHERE YOU START

RIDDEN / TESTED

032 BYE BYE BROWNIE
It's a fond farewell to the beaut Classic 350 Chrome

034 MONSTER HIGH
Same donk, but the Monster's SP chassis is sweeter

040 TWO-WAY STREET
The outstanding Street Triple 765 RS naked

050 DADDY LONG LEGS
Suzuki's finally given the big V-Strom some dirt legs

FEATURES

060 2023 MOTOGP PREVIEW
We analyse all the bikes, riders and teams

068 THE RACE TO CATCH DUCATI
Can the mighty Desmosedici be tamed?

076 JACK MILLER INTERVIEW
A wide-ranging chat about the big move to KTM

RACING

102 WORLDSBK, RD2, MANDALIKA
Toprak wins the round, Bautista increases lead

110 BATHURST LONG TRACK
The dirt stars come out to play in the popular event

REGULARS

10 News / **20** Not Forgotten / **23** Access / **28** Quiz / **30** Head-to-Head / **58** Poster / **84** Events / **86** Tested / **88** Top Gear / **92** Buyer's Guide / **97** Old School / **98** Revolving Racer / **101** In Pit Lane / **102** Sport / **114** Gassit

WEB HOT!

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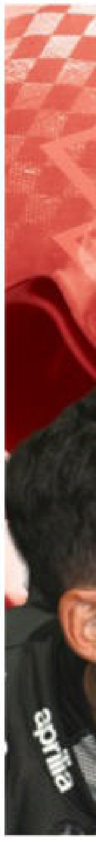
034



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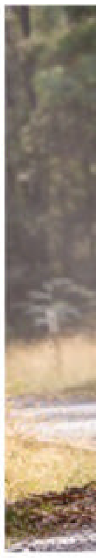

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FIRST RIDES!
MONSTER SP
ON STROM!

COVER STORY
RAPID FIRE!

Triumph's 2023 Street Triple 765 RS is impossibly enjoyable: anytime, anywhere

88

060

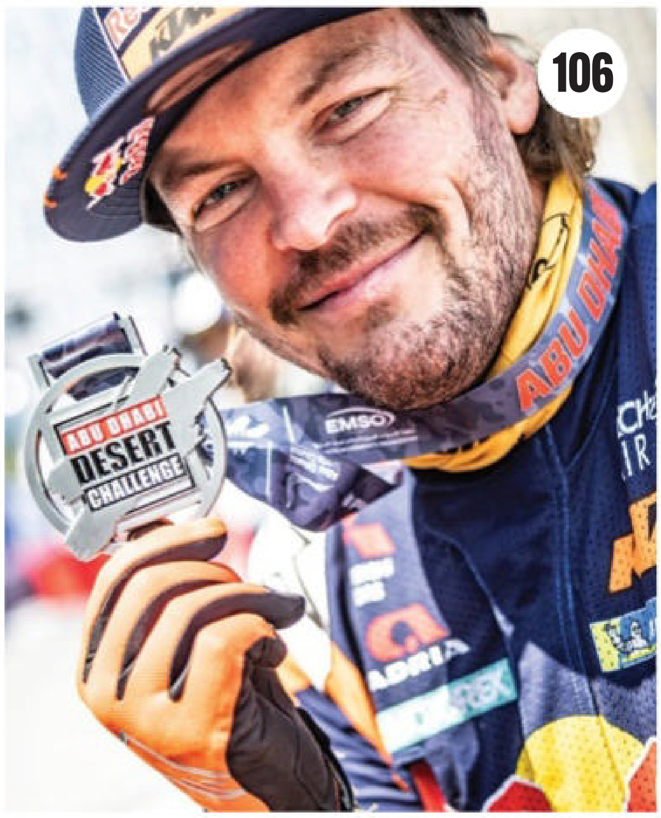
MOTOGP PREVIEW 2023

050

068

076

102



106

ED'S DESK. DEAN MELLOR

"EVEN ANOTHER 80HP WOULDN'T HAVE HELPED ME KEEP UP WITH SOME OF THE FAST BLOKES"

HOW MUCH power does anyone really need? That's a question I asked myself after testing Triumph's new Street Triple 765 RS the other day, and I guess the answer depends on where you're riding, and who you're riding with.

While even another 80hp wouldn't have helped me to keep up with some of the fast blokes on track at the Street Triple launch down at The Bend, the 765's 128hp and 80Nm was certainly more than enough for the road. It's so flickable, thanks to its light weight, well sorted suspension and wide handlebar, that it's a bagful of laughs on any twisty road, or on the racetrack.

Another midsize nakedbike I'm itching to get my mitts on is the new Ducati Monster SP that Adam Child tested for this issue. When the new Monster was launched a couple of years ago I rated it as one of the most fun bikes I had ridden in 2021, and this new SP version is bound to take the fun level up a notch with even less weight, Öhlins suspension front and rear and top-spec Brembo Stylema calipers.

You can read about both of these midsize nakeds in this issue, as well as the revised Suzuki V-Strom 1050DE that PV got to throw a leg over.

I have to admit that instead of going for a ride this weekend I spent a fair bit of time in front of the telly watching the final MotoGP test at Portimao in Portugal, where the 2023 MotoGP season will kick off on 25-26 March. The test bodes well for Ducati fans, with the bikes from Bologna showing the speed that won Ducati the triple crown in 2022.

As well as Ducati, Aprilia also showed some serious speed at Portimao and, while 2021 World Champion Fabio Quartararo stuggled for much of the weekend, the Yamaha factory squad finally found a setting to get him within cooee of the fastest Ducatis.

As well as bike tests, there's loads of 2023 MotoGP season preview content in this issue from our expert contributors including Neil Morrison, Michael Scott and Mat Oxley, and we have more expert analysis from Simon Crafar on the way, so make sure you keep an eye out for it.

Deano

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THE KNOW. IT HAPPENED SINCE LAST ISSUE

HOLY SHIFT!

BMW'S SUPER SINGLE

Variable valve timing for smaller models

The smaller models in BMW's range are about to get the same ShiftCam variable valve timing and lift system used in its R 1250 boxer twins and S 1000 RR inline four.

It's not clear whether the ShiftCam single will replace the 310cc engine in the current G-series BMW models or if it's intended for a larger-capacity single-cylinder. A super single would plug the substantial gap between the G-series and the 853cc F-series parallel twins.

The advantages of the Jekyll-and-Hyde ShiftCam system design are a torquey, less polluting engine at low revs with a performance boost at high revs.

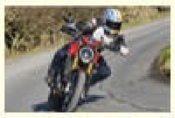
A new patent application shows a version mirroring that used in the R 1250 boxer twins. The intake camshaft can slide laterally to bring either a low-rpm lobe or a more aggressive high-rev lobe into contact with the intake valves. As on the other ShiftCam engines, solenoids move pegs into spiral slots on the camshaft, pulling it in one direction or the other depending which solenoid is activated.

The whole camshaft can move a few millimetres as it's driven via a wide idler gear, as on the R 1250 (on the four-cylinder S 1000 RR engine sliding sleeves carry the cam lobes on a splined shaft).

At low revs and small throttle openings a mild cam lobe can be used, with minimal lift (how wide the valve is opened), short duration (the length of time the valve is open) and little overlap (the period when the inlet valve has opened before the exhaust valve has closed). That combination helps increase gas speed into the cylinder at low revs, improving torque, and the reduced overlap means emissions are reduced and efficiency is improved.

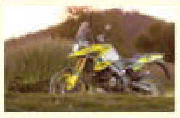
At higher revs the same lobe would be a limiting factor, restricting the overall amount of air/fuel mix entering the cylinder and restricting peak power. Here, the ShiftCam setup switches to a more aggressive cam lobe with more advanced

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

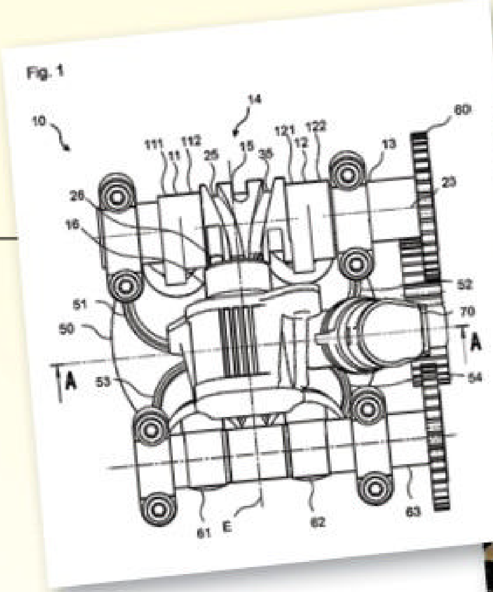


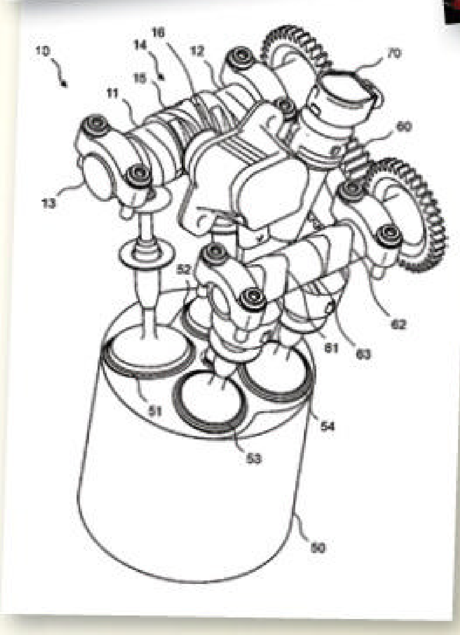
ADDING MORE LIFE TO THE DUKE MONSTER
Cornering bliss in updated SP model
34

ADVENTURE RIDING



DIGGING UP SOME REAL DIRT
Suzuki's V-Strom 1050DE now off-road capable
50





valve timing, more lift and more duration and overlap, allowing more air/fuel into the cylinder. At higher revs the added duration and advanced timing don't cause emissions problems, as there's less time for unburnt mixture to escape through the exhaust during the overlap period when both intake and exhaust valves are open.

The single-cylinder version is more compact than the R1250 ShiftCam arrangement. The solenoids to move the camshaft are between the valves rather than at the end of the camshaft, reducing the size of the cylinder head, and the spark plug is mounted at an angle to make space for it.

This is a clever adaptation of a design that has worked wonders for BMW's larger models.

BEN PURVIS

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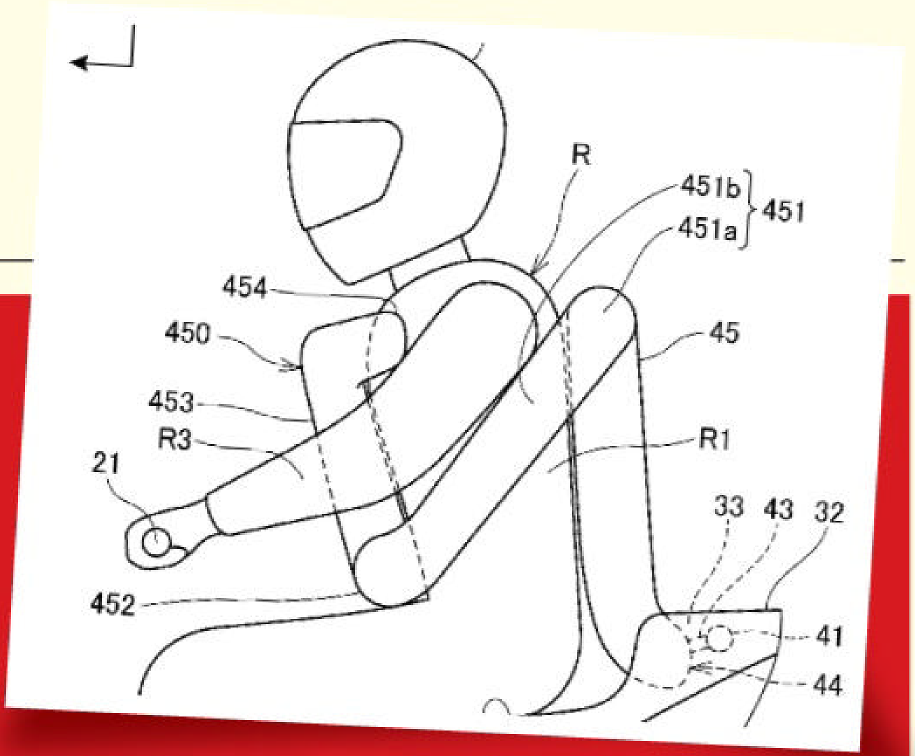
BROOKES IN TT DREAM TEAM

DOUBLE BRITISH Superbike champion Josh Brookes will return to this year's Isle of Man TT alongside last year's sensation Peter Hickman. Riding for the successful FHO Racing squad, Brookes will contest the RST Superbike, RL360 Superstock and Milwaukee Senior TT Races aboard a BMW M 1000 RR.

The Aussie has a strong TT pedigree with his best result an amazing fifth on the Norton prototype in the 2018 Senior TT. His 131.745mph (212.023km/h) lap made him the fastest Australian ever at the TT and he remains the 11th fastest rider of all time. Last year Hickman won four races and Brookes describes him as "both the perfect and, potentially, the worst teammate".

If 2022 BSB Superstock runner-up Billy McConnell makes his widely-tipped TT debut with recently signed Jackson Racing Honda teammate David Johnson, it will be the strongest Australian entry list in over a decade. **HAMISH COOPER**



HONDA RE-INFLATES AIRBAG IDEA

WE'VE ALL seen leathers with airbags working in racing formulas like MotoGP. Now Honda wants to go one step further, mounting them on a motorcycle but getting them to activate like airbag-equipped clothing. It has applied for a host of new patents that address the slow take-up from road riders for this type of protective clothing.

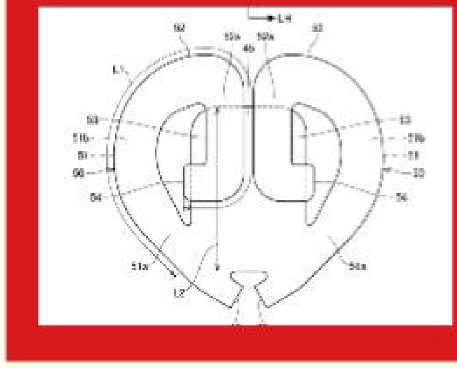
Similarly, the idea of equipping motorcycles with airbags has failed to gain traction across the industry, even though it's been well over a decade since Honda introduced this technology on its Goldwing.

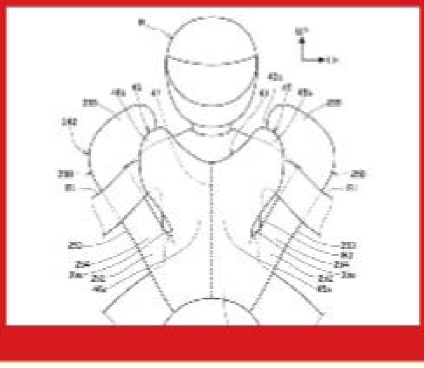
Now Honda plans to cross the boundary between those two safety strategies, mounting airbags on its bikes but intending them to behave more like airbag-equipped clothing. It is developing an airbag that bursts out of the bike's seat - either ahead of the rider or behind, as there are several versions under assessment. It will then wrap around the rider, creating a sort of instant life vest. Honda's patent applications show several styles, protecting both the rider's chest and back, and wrapping around arms, sides or shoulders.

Inflating in a fraction of a second, the airbag is intended to expand in the early stages of a crash. As soon as it's filled it detaches from the motorcycle, remaining wrapped around the rider even after that person is separated from the motorcycle.

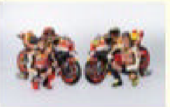
This means the airbag can work in a range of accident scenarios. It also gives inflatable protection to riders who aren't wearing airbag-equipped clothing. The detachment process also simultaneously seals the airbag, using heat to melt it shut and prevent the gas inside escaping too fast.

This means the inflator component - probably based around an electrically actuated chemical reaction like the airbags in cars - can remain in the motorcycle's seat. **BP**



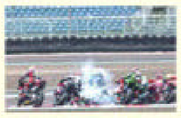


IN PIT LANE COLUMN



THE QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION
We take a look at the 2023 agenda items
101

SPORT STARTS PAGE 102



A WILD AND WOOLLY MANDALIKA WSBK
Twists and turns at every angle
102

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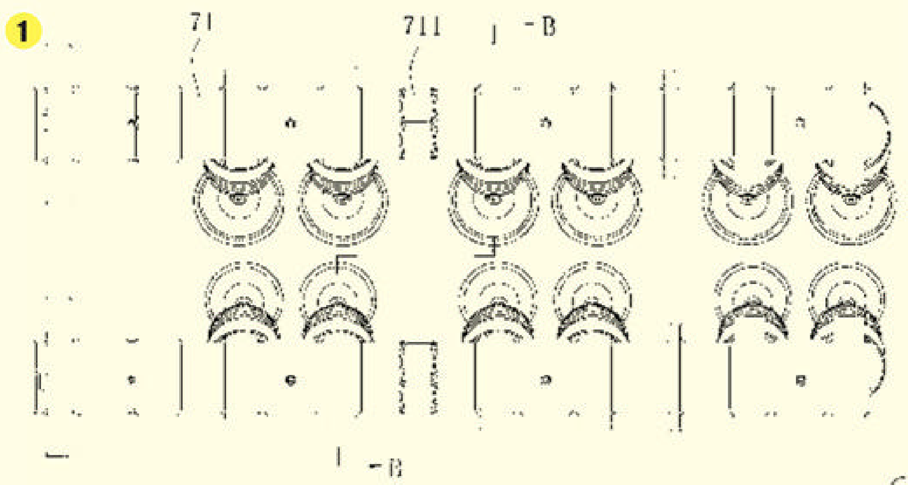
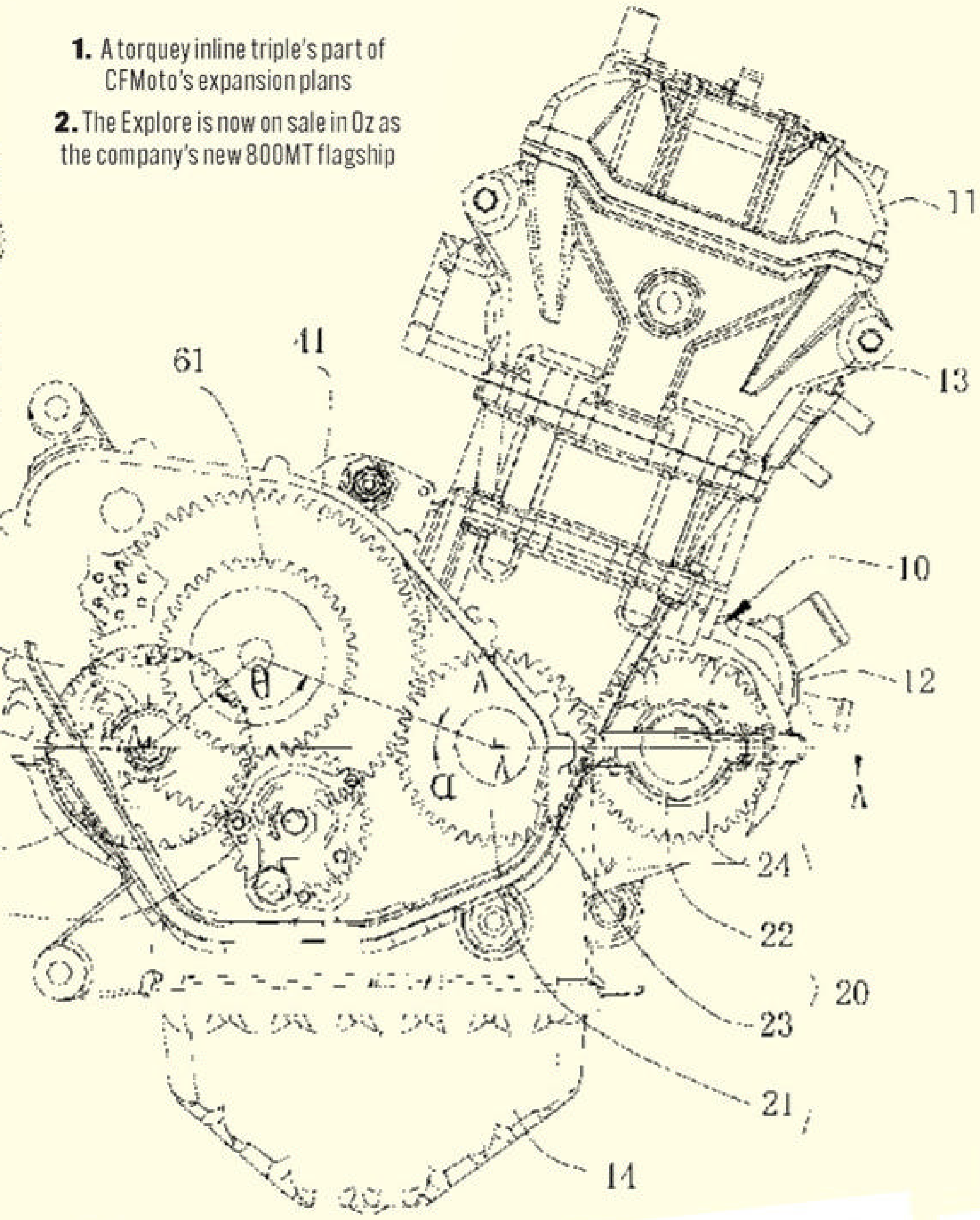




1. A torquey inline triple's part of CFMoto's expansion plans

2. The Explore is now on sale in Oz as the company's new 800MT flagship

CFMOTO READIES ALL-NEW TRIPLE

New 675cc three-cylinder based on 450cc twin

Chinese powerhouse CFMoto is planning a 675cc three-cylinder to complement the proposed 1250cc V-twin streetfighter and 1000cc, 150kW V4 superbike we've already reported on (AMCN Vol 72 No 15). This is all part of an aggressive expansion into international markets that also includes significant updates to existing models.

Just one of these is the Australian release of its $16,490 (ride away) 800MT Explore, a 'flagship variant' that comes with a retuned version of the 799cc parallel-twin engine, eight-inch multimedia interface, stability and traction control, along with blind-spot, lane-change-assist and rear-collision-warning radar as well as six riding modes.

Behind the scenes CFMoto has quietly filed a patent application describing a three-cylinder engine that, from the illustrations, appears based on the 450cc parallel-twin debuting this year in its new 450SR sports model. The 450SR is the start of a new range, set to be joined this year by a higher-spec 450SR-S version with a single-sided swingarm and a 450NK nakedbike.

By adding an extra cylinder, the same engine can be expanded to flesh out the middleweight line-up. A balance shaft has been added to the front of the engine, as is the norm with inline triples.

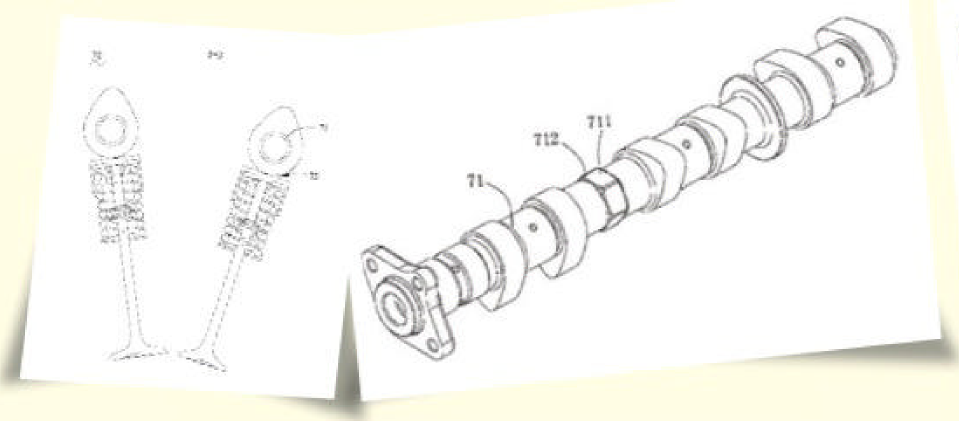
The patent clearly shows a three-cylinder engine with a cylinder head design similar to the 450 twin's, suggesting it shares components like valves and pistons. If the bore and stroke are unchanged – 72mm x 55.1mm – then the result will be a 673cc triple, matching the capacity of the old Triumph 675 models and MV's first F3 bikes.

Compared to the Triumph and MV triples, the CFMoto design would be a longer-stroke, smaller-bore design, suggesting less outright performance. However, if CFMoto opts to increase the bore to match the near-800cc capacities of Triumph and MV's latest triples then its bore/stroke ratio will be closer to those engines.

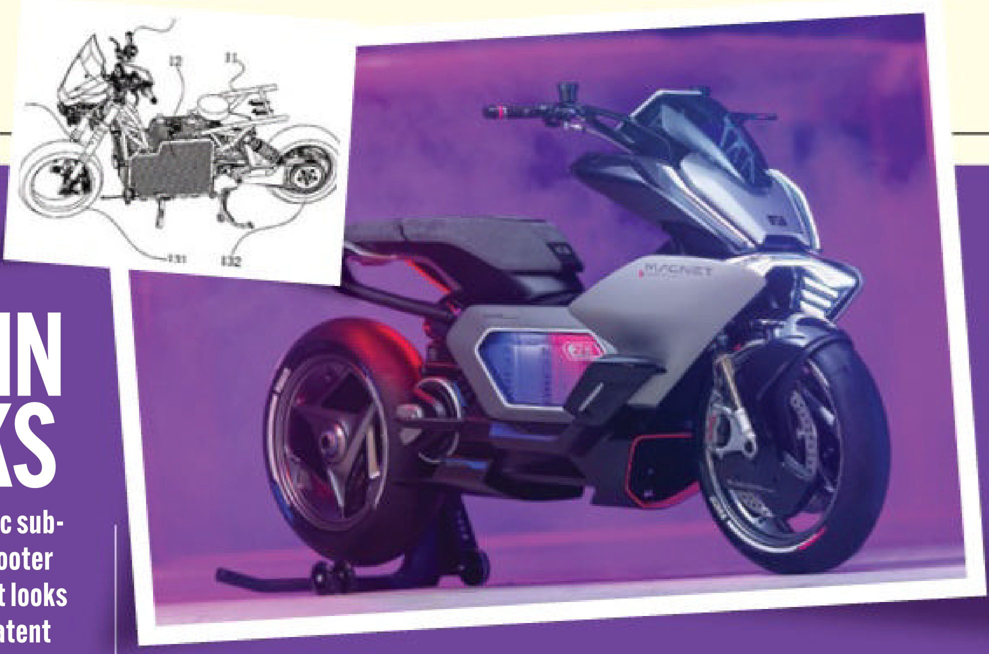
It won't be China's first three-cylinder bike engine, though. Rival Qianjiang already manufacturers its own version of Benelli's old triple in 1209cc and 899cc forms for the Benelli 1200GT tourer and the reborn TNT899, both available only in China at the moment. Zontes is on the verge of launching its own three-cylinder sportsbike, which is expected to make an official appearance soon.

BEN PURVIS & HAMISH COOPER

MATCHING THE CAPACITY OF THE OLD TRIUMPH 675 MODELS AND MV'S FIRST F3



EV MEGA-SCOOTER IN THE WORKS



LAST YEAR, CFMoto's all-electric sub-brand Zeeho showed a maxi-scooter concept dubbed Magnet. Now it looks headed for production with a patent application showing a more real-world version of the machine.

Styling and dimensions share key elements with the concept, including the single-sided swingarm, inverted fork and superbike-style dual radial-mount front brake calipers. However, it also has a much more production-style battery pack and rear suspension.

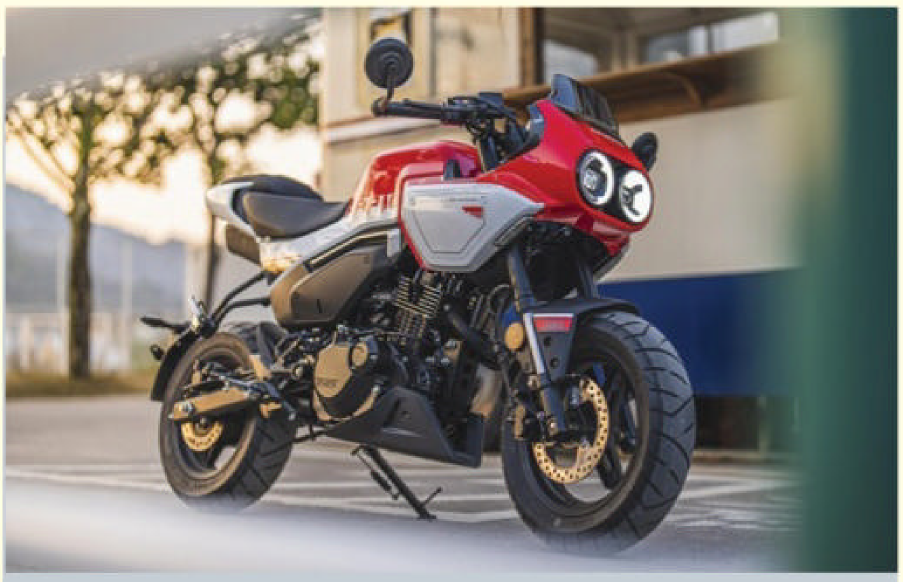
A chunky alloy casting doubles as the scooter's structural centre, with bolt-on tubular subframes front and rear to hold the steering head and seat unit. It's a solution a growing number of electric bikes are adopting, notably the upcoming LiveWire 'Arrow' platform, which debuts with the Del Mar, and in Bombardier's new range of CanAm electric bikes. CFMoto has also used the same solution for its 300GT-E model, designed in response to a tender for an electric police bike from China's authorities.

This battery case is the focus of the new patent document, as it's intended to be the centrepiece for a whole array of different electric bikes.

The patent explains that the alloy side panels of the case can be changed depending on the demands of particular models, allowing a finned, air-cooled battery case or a smooth-sided version with liquid cooling channels inside it. The implication is that the same central chassis is intended to be used on bikes of a variety of different performance levels.

The patent for the Zeeho Magnet-style CFMoto also shows changes to the rear suspension setup, with a more conventionally angled monoshock on the single-sided swingarm instead of the concept's horizontal version.

Carryover elements shared with the concept include the relatively long wheelbase and the iPad-style, portrait-oriented TFT display panel for the rider. **BP**



MARVELLOUS MINI

FOLLOWING ON from our report about CFMoto's XO Papio (AMCN Vol 72 No 15), we can now reveal the full details of this miniature marvel. What looks like a scaled-down 1980s endurance racer is powered by the 126cc, air-cooled single-cylinder from the existing Papio, which is a more conventionally styled Honda Grom rival. However, the frame and swingarm are new, along with an inverted front fork.

Clever styling reflects the 'XO' name in several places, including the headlights. Fairing panels are removable and can be swapped out.

Two versions are offered in China and they are incredibly cheap, with the higher-spec one (more colour options and ABS disc brakes) selling for just $A2300.

Incidentally, Papio means baboon, giving a clear nod to Honda's Monkey, Ape and Gorilla models. **BP**

BRIEFS

CAPE CRUSADERS

A new company offers riders a fully guided and all-inclusive seven-day tour from Port Douglas to Cape York, riding KTMs. The Top End Moto Tours' route traverses breathtaking and challenging terrain, including river crossings, tropical jungle, sand dunes and rugged outback gravel. For details see www.topendmototours.com.au.

2023 DGR

From Bangkok to Ballarat, riders are being urged to pre-register for the worldwide 21 May Distinguished Gentleman's Ride. The popular fundraising event will be officially launched on 27 March. To celebrate its 10-year involvement with the ride, Triumph is offering a limited-edition DGR sweatshirt range.

PLASTIC FANTASTIC

UK-based Muc-Off, a specialist in motorcycle cleaning products, has smashed its own target to save plastic from landfill. In three years it has saved 208 tonnes by reformulating, repackaging and redeveloping its plastic products.

HARLEY DEALS ON WHEELS

Buyers of Harley-Davidson's 2022 Cruiser or Grand American Touring models will receive a genuine parts and accessories bonus worth up to $3000. For example, Low Rider S buyers can add a Screamin' Eagle air cleaner or Fat Boy customers a single-sided swingarm bag.

SMOK'N STEAL

Two-stroke enduro specialist Rieju is offering up to $2000 off its MR300 models. The Spanish brand uses top-shelf components on its range of bikes and accessories.

KAWA'S AUCTION KING HIT

Shannons Summer Online Auction generated $17.5m in sales. Underlining the continuing appetite for classic Japanese was the $45k paid for a 1973 Kawasaki Z1A 900, the auction's top price for a motorcycle.

BRIEFS. YOUR QUICK FIX

DID YOU KNOW? One in five people own a motorcycle in Colombia, which has a population of 51 million and an industry producing models for six major manufacturers including Honda, Kawasaki, Yamaha and Suzuki.

“It’s a big event and it’s thrilling, but it does create nerves and it’s full of emotion”

Josh Brookes sums up his feelings about returning to the Isle of Man TT, this time as teammate to legend in the making Peter Hickman.

20

UglyFish Eyewear celebrates 20 years in business and over two million pairs of protective glasses sold - no mean feat for a small business. It all started after founder Manuch Darabi arrived in Australia from Iran in 1989 and with just $500 to his name began selling sunglasses at local markets.

BAG A WINNER

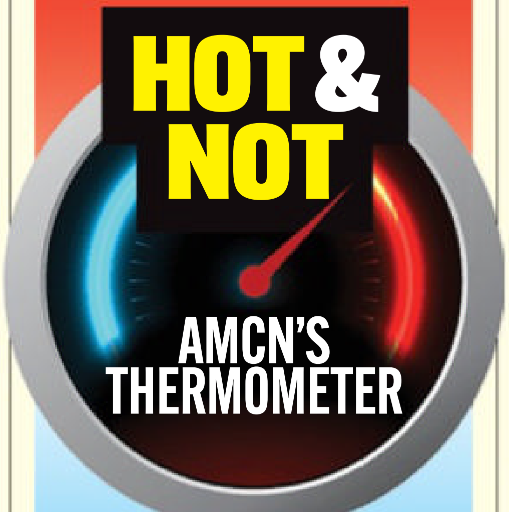
Indian is releasing just 29 replicas of the Challenger RR that took out the 2022 AMA King of the Baggers championship. These 1800cc monsters are built to the same race specification by the S&S techs who assembled and maintained Tyler O’Hara’s No. 29 championship winner. Look out for a track test in an upcoming issue of AMCN.

GREEN LIGHT

Yamaha is the first Japanese motorcycle manufacturer to start using “green aluminium”, refined using renewable energy.

MOTOE STUNNER

In pre-season testing at Jerez 10 MotoE riders are within a 10th of a second and under the 1m48s barrier on Ducati’s new electric racebike.

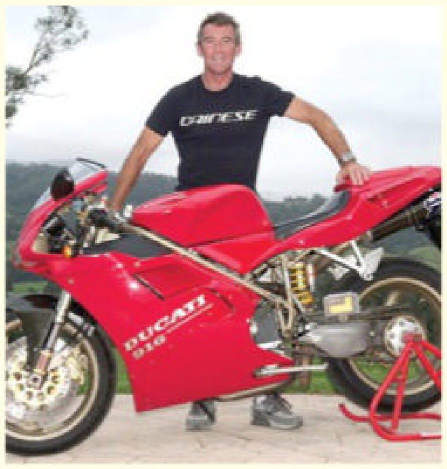


CHINA LUCKS OUT

Its failed Covid-zero policy has caused China to suffer its greatest decline in motorcycle sales in 20 years.

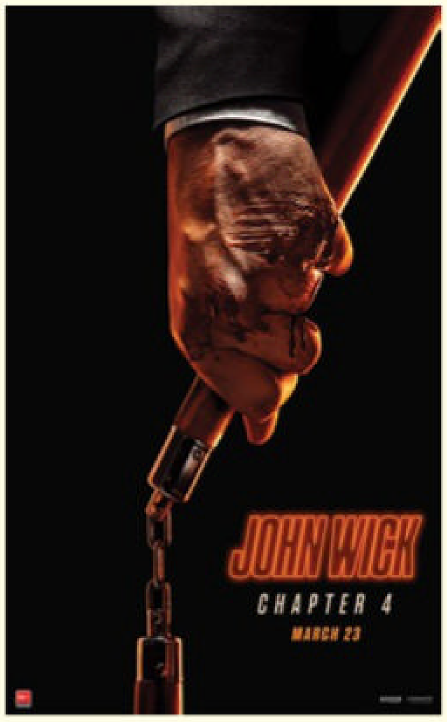
WAKEFIELD WAKEUP CALL

With demand for motorsport at record levels and circuits booked out months in advance, Motorsport Australia has urged NSW to develop a strategy that includes Wakefield Park.



CORSER’S CORSA?

Troy Corser is selling the bespoke Ducati built for him by the factory before his championship-winning season. His 1995 916 was hand assembled by Cagiva’s leading technicians in recognition of his achievements in AMA Superbike. It features several updates that only came on the market a year later. These include the biposto seating arrangement and race-spec exhaust. It was delivered to Troy’s Wollongong home in late-1994 and complied in February 1995. Over the years he has clocked up 15,295km. Price is $65k. More info at www.raidermoto.com.



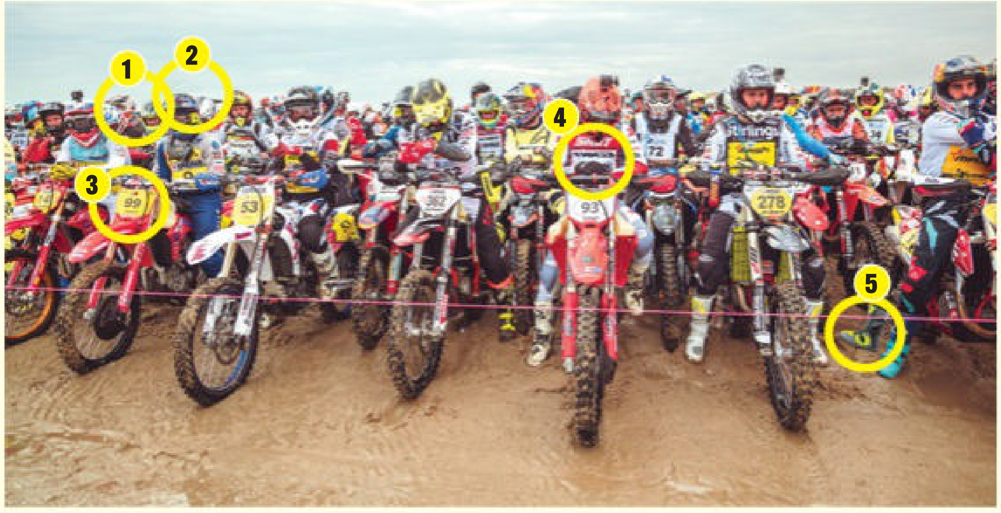
WIN WICK TIX!

AMCN is giving you the chance to win one of 10 double passes to see *John Wick: Chapter 4*, the latest instalment in the John Wick franchise starring Keanu Reeves with, of course, an action-packed motorcycle scene. To go in the running, tell us in 25 words or less, what motorcycle you think John Wick should ride and why. Email your entries to amcn@amcn.com.au before 20 March 2023 and if you’re one of 10 winners we’ll post the tickets straight to your door, so make sure you include your postal address.

MENTAL TWISTIES

It’s eagle-eyed **Debbie Collins from Hamilton Valley, NSW** who picks up the loot this issue!

1. Extra head
2. GoPro missing
3. 9 now 99
4. Kenny flipped
5. Random boot



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BFO WARM-UP PARTY

Kingscliff to set the scene for epic motorcycle festival

KINGSCLIFF
BEACH HOTEL
BOTTLE S

The Feramones, formed by ex-10cc guitarist Rick Fenn, will headline the launch of BikeFest Oz in a warm-up event at Kingscliff on 22 April. Called Official BFO! Warm Up, the day is planned to attract riders from northern NSW, the Gold Coast, Brisbane and surrounding districts to get a taste of what BikeFest Oz will offer when the five-day event is run from 7-11 June.

Formed in London in the 1990s but now based at Byron Bay, The Feramones will play a set of classic rock and pop from the 70s and 80s at the Kingscliff Beach Hotel. Before settling Down Under the band played numerous events around the UK, including for the Royal Family and at celebrity private functions.

BikeFest Oz! promotor Chris Beattie says support from the local motorcycle industry is growing and several motorcycle businesses will also be involved with displays and a door prize at the hotel.

"Everyone has just been so supportive of what we're trying to do and it's a great example of how motorcycling people like to come together and enjoy their bikes, riding experiences and promote our great activity to the wider public," said Beattie. "We're confident we'll fill the Kingscliff Beach Hotel with riders from as far afield as Brisbane and down to Ballina when the Official Bike Fest Warm Up kicks off from 10am with a bike show and other fun stuff planned throughout the day."

Part of the day's activities will include the Minjungbal People, whose dancers and performers will showcase aspects of their culture.

"It's great to have the Minjungbal People on board as I've been an enthusiastic supporter of their youth diversion activities and programs," said Beattie. "They have embraced our festival and will be playing an active part in showcasing their incredible culture and other aspects of their connection to the land and surrounding areas."

BikeFest Oz has been conceived as an all-inclusive motorcycle event, catering to a cross-section of riders, from road to adventure and touring. The official Bike Fest Oz! Schedule of Events has been posted on www.bikefestoz.com.au.

HAMISH COOPER

RECALL ROSTER

CHECK IF YOUR MOTORCYCLE IS AFFECTED BY THIS RECENT RECALL

MODEL 2020-2022 Suzuki GSX1300RM2
IMPORTER Suzuki Australia Pty Ltd
NUMBER OF AFFECTED MOTORCYCLES 191
ISSUE The fluid passage in the front brake master cylinder may remain closed after the brake lever is released. This may result in brakes not working as intended.
ACTION REQUIRED When parts become available, Suzuki Australia will contact owners in writing to make an appointment at their preferred Suzuki dealership and have the recall carried out free of charge.

MODEL 2022-2023 BMW M 1000 R and S 1000 RR
IMPORTER BMW Australia Ltd
NUMBER OF AFFECTED MOTORCYCLES 121
ISSUE Due to a manufacturing issue, the fulcrum pin in the optional milled front brake lever may not meet the required specifications. This may result in brakes not working as intended.
POTENTIAL HAZARD Increased risk of an accident
ACTION REQUIRED Owners should immediately contact their preferred authorised BMW Motorrad dealer, or BMW Australia's Customer Interaction Centre to arrange to have the recall completed.

FOR | PIONEERS

63 hp 107.6 kg Quickshift Launch Control

Victory is a decision

Receiving multiple technical upgrades for 2023 to maintain its class-leading performance on the track, the FS 450 remains the pinnacle machine for supermoto riders. A new engine that produces a broad spread of controllable power.

2023

FS 450

Scan here

for special deals on the Husqvarna FS 450

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husqvarna-motorcycles.com

www.kiska.com

Photo: P. Platzer, KISKA GmbH

Please make no attempt to imitate the illustrated riding scenes, always wear protective clothing and observe the applicable provisions of the road traffic regulations!
The illustrated vehicles may vary in selected details from the production models and some illustrations feature optional equipment available at additional cost.

THE YEAR WAS...

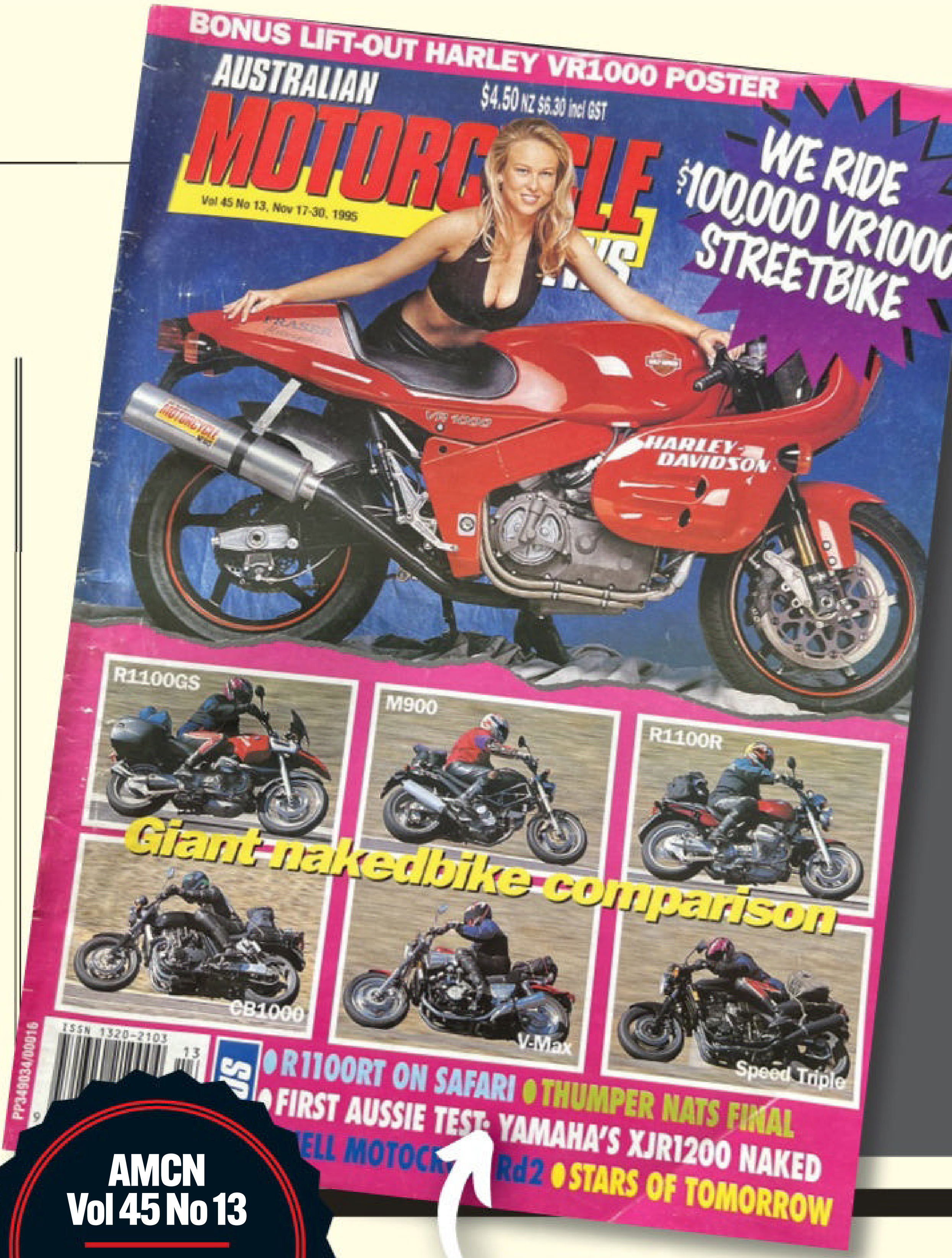
1 9 9 5

US DOOR MAT

Mat Mladin began his return to the world stage after finalising a deal to race in the 1996 AMA Superbike Championship with the factory-backed Yoshimura Suzuki team. The then 23-year-old Aussie snapped up the ride made vacant by the retirement of former WorldSBK champ, Fred Merkel. Well, we all knew that Mat's AMA career would probably go a whisker better than his year in 500 GPs aboard the Cagiva, but who'd have thought the young New South Welshman would dominate the series for almost the entire next decade?

RIDDEN/ TESTED

BMW R 1100 R
BMW R 1100 RT
BMW R 1100 GS
Ducati M900 Monster
Harley-Davidson VR1000
Honda CB1000 Big One
Triumph Speed Triple
Yamaha XJ900
Yamaha CY50 Jog
Yamaha V-Max
Yamaha XJR1200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R1100GS
M900
R1100R
Giant nakedbike comparison
CB1000
V-Max
Speed Triple
ISSN 1320-2103
● R1100RT ON SAFARI ● THUMPER NATS FINAL
● FIRST AUSSIE TEST: YAMAHA'S XJR1200 NAKED
ELL MOTOCR Rd2 ● STARS OF TOMORROW

AMCN Vol 45 No 13

92 pages, $4.50
17 - 30 Nov 1995
Editor Ken Wootton

COVER

Still one of the best-looking Harleys ever made, and the VR1000 really made the cover pop. To counter the in-your-face splendidness of the heavenly Hog, we made the lower half of the cover look like a bike classifieds page.

PICS OF THE ISSUE

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First good

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Suzuki RGV250SP which debuted
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According to Suzuki Australia's
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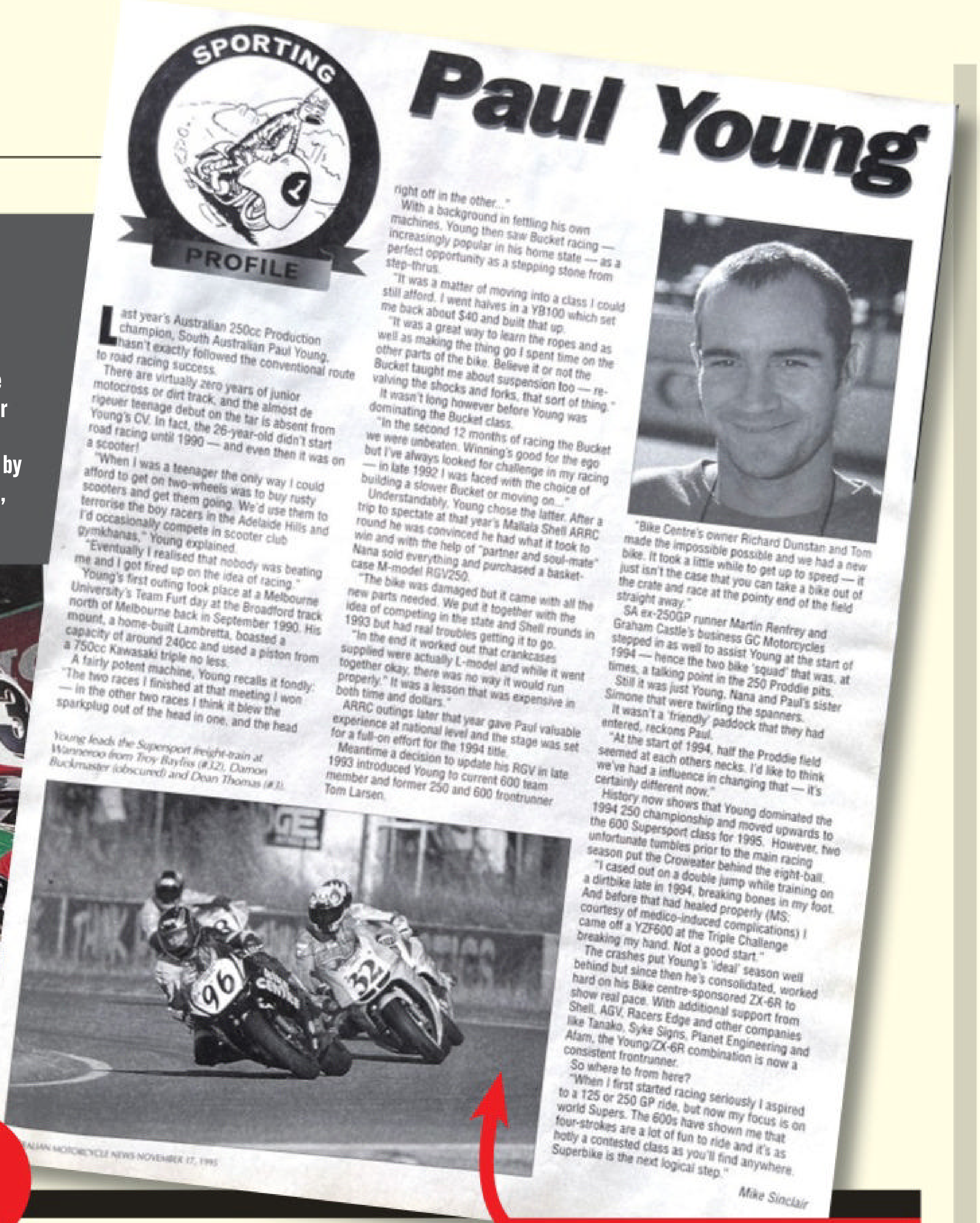
produced for Japan only," s
"Nevertheless, we've to
important model to us. A
Japan," Bayly comment
The new bike certainly
on its ear. As well as a
sports an all-new 70ps 7
RGV250 GP racer Suzuki

WHAT A FOG

We broke the news that Carl Fogarty would be partnering Aaron Slight in the factory Honda WorldSBK team for 1996 after winning the championship on a Ducati in 1994 and 1995. "I'm sick of people saying the only reason I won the Superbike World Championship for the past two year was because I rode a Ducati," Fogarty moaned. "The Honda is fast and I aim to prove I'm the best rider in the world by winning on it." Ducati-riding Aussie Troy Corser won the 1996 title, while poor old Foggy never won another championship.

Castrol
HONDA
RVF

TRALIAN MOTORCYCLE NEWS NOVEMBER 17, 1995



SPORTING PROFILE

Paul Young

Last year's Australian 250cc Production champion, South Australian Paul Young, hasn't exactly followed the conventional route to road racing success.

There are virtually zero years of junior motocross or dirt track, and the almost de rigeuer teenage debut on the tar is absent from Young's CV. In fact, the 26-year-old didn't start road racing until 1990 — and even then it was on a scooter!

"When I was a teenager the only way I could afford to get on two-wheels was to buy rusty scooters and get them going. We'd use them to terrorise the boy racers in the Adelaide Hills and I'd occasionally compete in scooter club gymkhanas," Young explained.

"Eventually I realised that nobody was beating me and I got fired up on the idea of racing."

Young's first outing took place at a Melbourne University's Team Furt day at the Broadford track north of Melbourne back in September 1990. His mount, a home-built Lambretta, boasted a capacity of around 240cc and used a piston from a 750cc Kawasaki triple no less.

A fairly potent machine, Young recalls it fondly: "The two races I finished at that meeting I won — in the other two races I think it blew the sparkplug out of the head in one, and the head right off in the other..."

With a background in fettling his own machines, Young then saw Bucket racing — increasingly popular in his home state — as a perfect opportunity as a stepping stone from step-thrus.

"It was a matter of moving into a class I could still afford. I went halves in a YB100 which set me back about $40 and built that up.

"It was a great way to learn the ropes and as well as making the thing go I spent time on the other parts of the bike. Believe it or not the Bucket taught me about suspension too — re-valving the shocks and forks, that sort of thing."

It wasn't long however before Young was dominating the Bucket class.

"In the second 12 months of racing the Bucket we were unbeaten. Winning's good for the ego but I've always looked for challenge in my racing — in late 1992 I was faced with the choice of building a slower Bucket or moving on..."

Understandably, Young chose the latter. After a trip to spectate at that year's Mallala Shell ARRC round he was convinced he had what it took to win and with the help of "partner and soul-mate" Nana sold everything and purchased a basket-case M-model RGV250.

"The bike was damaged but it came with all the new parts needed. We put it together with the idea of competing in the state and Shell rounds in 1993 but had real troubles getting it to go.

"In the end it worked out that crankcases supplied were actually L-model and while it went together okay, there was no way it would run properly." It was a lesson that was expensive in both time and dollars."

ARRC outings later that year gave Paul valuable experience at national level and the stage was set for a full-on effort for the 1994 title.

Meantime a decision to update his RGV in late 1993 introduced Young to current 600 team member and former 250 and 600 frontrunner Tom Larsen.

"Bike Centre's owner Richard Dunstan and Tom made the impossible possible and we had a new bike. It took a little while to get up to speed — it just isn't the case that you can take a bike out of the crate and race at the pointy end of the field straight away."

SA ex-250GP runner Martin Renfrey and Graham Castle's business GC Motorcycles stepped in as well to assist Young at the start of 1994 — hence the two bike 'squad' that was, at times, a talking point in the 250 Proddie pits.

Still it was just Young, Nana and Paul's sister Simone that were twirling the spanners.

It wasn't a 'friendly' paddock that they had entered, reckons Paul.

"At the start of 1994, half the Proddie field seemed at each others necks. I'd like to think we've had a influence in changing that — it's certainly different now."

History now shows that Young dominated the 1994 250 championship and moved upwards to the 600 Supersport class for 1995. However, two unfortunate tumbles prior to the main racing season put the Croweater behind the eight-ball.

"I cased out on a double jump while training on a dirtbike late in 1994, breaking bones in my foot. And before that had healed properly (MS: courtesy of medico-induced complications) I came off a YZF600 at the Triple Challenge breaking my hand. Not a good start."

The crashes put Young's 'ideal' season well behind but since then he's consolidated, worked hard on his Bike centre-sponsored ZX-6R to show real pace. With additional support from Shell, AGV, Racers Edge and other companies like Tanako, Syke Signs, Planet Engineering and Alam, the Young/ZX-6R combination is now a consistent frontrunner.

So where to from here?

"When I first started racing seriously I aspired to a 125 or 250 GP ride, but now my focus is on world Supers. The 600s have shown me that four-strokes are a lot of fun to ride and it's as hotly a contested class as you'll find anywhere. Superbike is the next logical step."

Mike Sinclair

Young leads the Supersport freight-train at Wanneroo from Troy Bayliss (#32), Damon Buckmaster (obscured) and Dean Thomas (#3).

ALIAN MOTORCYCLE NEWS NOVEMBER 17, 1995

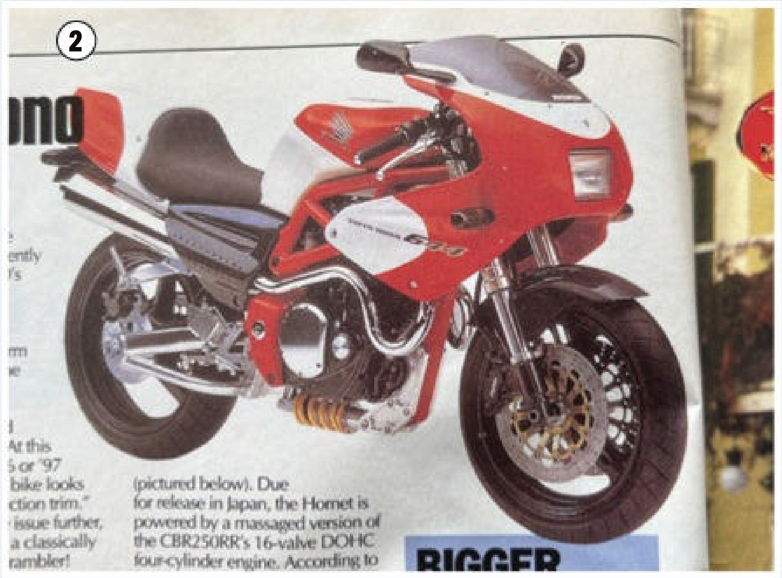
HE SAID THAT?

"We were good friends at one stage, but that's definitely changed over the last few years"

Aaron Slight commenting on the relationship with his soon-to-be teammate Carl Fogarty.

That guy!

Paul Young, as in AMCN's legendary former Road Test Editor!



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(pictured below). Due for release in Japan, the Hornet is powered by a massaged version of the CBR250RR's 16-valve DOHC four-cylinder engine. According to

BIGGER

1. Suzuki unveiled its 1996 RGV250SP at the Tokyo Motor Show. The two-stroke Zuki never made it down under - damn shame that!

2. Honda's 644 supermono concept bike. We wonder how much Honda paid Yamaha for the TRX850 fairing?

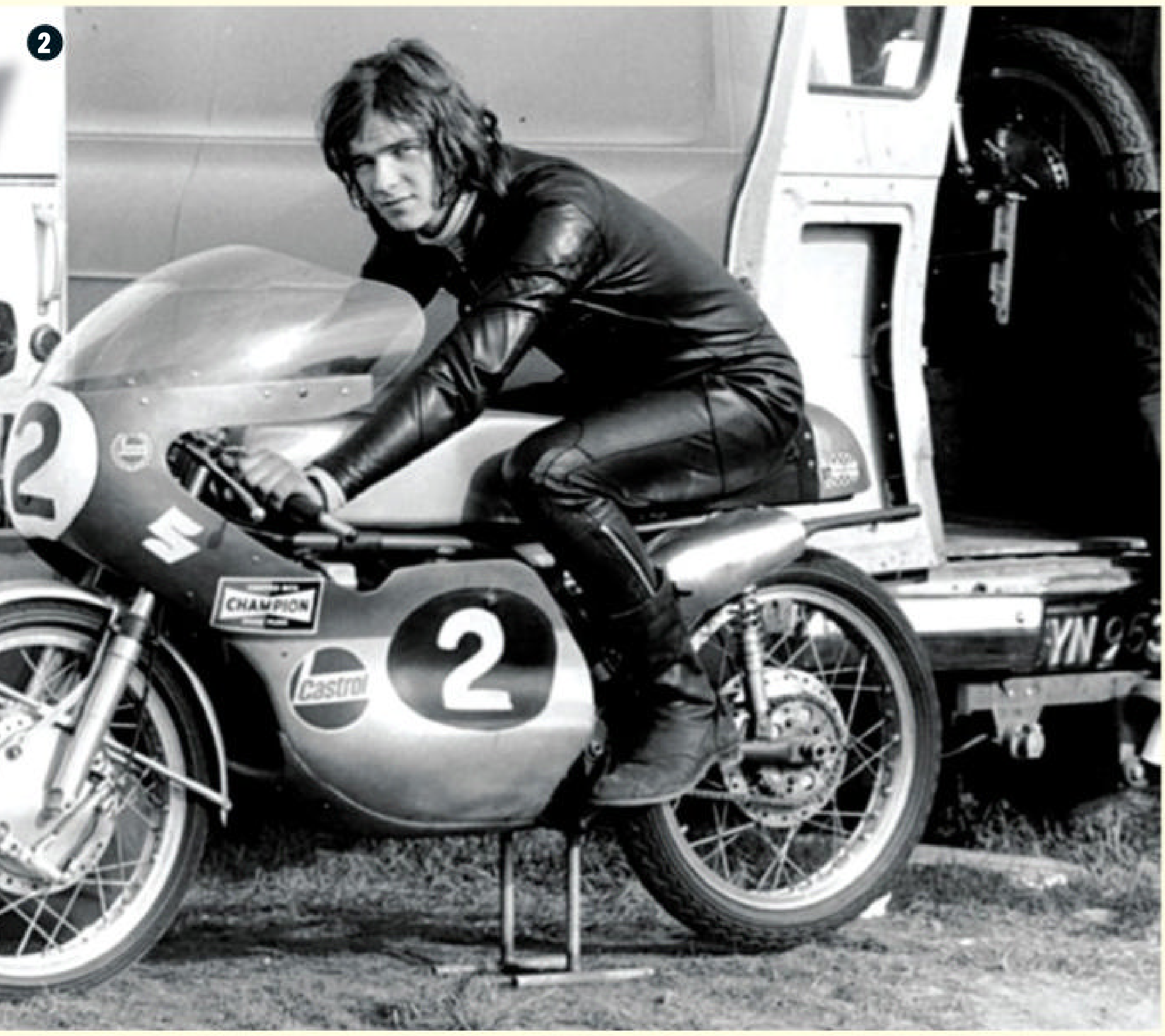
3. This is a crop of mostly naked AMCN staffers in 1995's Tour of Duty comparo. There's currently no one on staff who would or should try to re-enact this - we hope!

1. Like Rossi in modern times, Sheene's personality transcended motorcycle sport **2.** Aboard the Suzuki 125 GP bike **3.** On the legendary Heron Suzuki RG500 in 1976, which took him to world title success **4.** Working for Channel 10 at the Oz GP in 2002, flanked by Daryl Beattie (left) and Jeremy Burgess (far right) **5.** They were onto something in 1970 sherry as the trophy! **6.** Sheene with a very young Kevin Schwantz (far right) in 1989

WORDS **PETE WHITAKER** + PHOTOGRAPHY **AMCN ARCHIVES**

BARRY SHEENE

This month marks 20 years since the motorcycling world lost the likeable two-time world champ



Born into a family in which his devoted mum Iris was forever making tea and sandwiches for the pit crew, and dad Frank was the acknowledged expert at fettling small-capacity racebikes, Barry Sheene was preordained to be a motorcycle racer.

Having already embarked on a career of smoking, drinking and chasing anything wearing a skirt, Barry made his race debut at Brands Hatch in 1968 riding one of Frank's 125cc Bultacos. A week later he was on the podium. Prolific winning laurels followed as, over the next decade, Barry won nine British championships as well as simultaneously creating and fostering an avidly partisan fan base.

In his earlier years on the continent as a pit gofer he'd witnessed enough to realise the status only grand prix racing could provide. So despite being skint, he and Frank headed to Europe to contest the 1971 125cc World Championship, a campaign which created the classic duel: the long-haired Cockney git living out of a van, versus Spanish maestro Angel Nieto who was residing in luxury hotels and arriving at each circuit with a stunning young lady on each arm.

Barry scored his first race win at Spa, a second at Imatra in Finland, plus enough podiums to run second in the world championship. Though he and Nieto became lifelong friends, it was the latter who walked away with the champagne, the silverware and the women. To make ends meet Barry grabbed the offer to ride a 50cc Van Veen Kriedler at Brno, winning in the rain and taking the first step to becoming the only rider in history to win a world championship race on both a 50cc and a 500cc grand prix bike.

LONG-HAIRED COCKNEY VERSUS SPANISH MAESTRO ANGEL NIETO

It was an era when grand prix racing organisers were money-grabbing conmen in league with corrupt officials, treating riders with contempt. However, having established the pulling power of his name in Britain, Barry set about doing the same across Europe, improving his profile with promoters, sponsors and, eventually, manufacturers. His demands for brown envelopes stuffed with cash proved only the start of negotiations. When the privateer riders threatened the FIM with a breakaway world series in 1979, Barry strongly supported the group even though he was already enjoying most of the benefits they were seeking.

Barry was possibly the first world champion who flatly refused to race the Isle of Man due to safety issues, so it was perhaps ironic his worst accident took place at a relatively benign circuit such as Silverstone, where he'd won the faux British Grand Prix in 1974; one of Barry's 90 world-class victories during the 1970s.

After considerable speculation, in early 1985 Barry announced his retirement and intention to move to Australia's Gold Coast, claiming the weather would be beneficial to his

3

SUZUKI
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health – though his old mate Andrew Marriott suggested Her Majesty's Special Tax Unit may have prompted the move by taking an interest in Barry's Rolls Royce and new helicopter.

Barry's good fortune continued when his arrival in Australia coincided with SBS acquiring the rights to grand prix racing coverage – who better to host the show than a former world champ? Yet while Barry was a major celebrity in Britain, he was virtually unknown in Australia and it may have stayed that way had he remained with the public broadcaster.

Then Wayne Gardner won a world title, turning motorcycle racing into a major drawcard. Kerry Packer threw a wad of cash at Barry and, together with Darrell Eastlake and Formula 1 champ Alan 'AJ' Jones, the trio became the face of motorsport on the top-rating program *Wide World Of Sports*.

Later, when Barry became a V8 Supercar spruiker he starred in a series of memorable Shell TV commercials as a foil to the laconic touring car hero Dick Johnson. So to the general Australian public, that's probably how Barry would be best remembered. Yet to the motorcycling community, his lifelong friend and fellow world champ Kenny Roberts said it best.

"Barry was the Valentino Rossi of his day and did incredible things for motorcycling."

Or, according to longtime sidekick and fellow racer Steve Parrish: "Barry didn't want to be very good at anything, he wanted to be f***ing remarkable".

GALFER

PERFORMANCE BRAKING SYSTEMS

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Excellent feel and modulation, this sintered pad compound is built for off road and street use depending on the application. Great heat recovery and easy on the rotor, this is our most popular high-performance compound. Precision made in our Galfer factory in Spain.

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MOTOMUCK
CLEANER

WINNER
LETTER OF THE ISSUE

Motomuck

Win five litres of Motomuck Motorcycle Cleaner to keep your ride as clean as a whistle. Valued at $59.95!

Include your full name and address in your letter, via post or email. Long letters will be cut to fit, so don't ramble. The views expressed by readers are not necessarily those of the editor.

LETTER OF THE ISSUE

Starts with service

I noted with interest that Aprilia has dropped prices on some models. I live in Western Australia, where we have only one dealer and service centre, and I own a Tuono 660. It's a great bike, but between a 400km round trip to the dealer, and said dealer being hard to deal with, I buy my parts from my next closest dealer, which is 2350km away in Adelaide (great service and great staff).

Aprilia would sell more bikes in WA if they at least had a few service locations in a few major centres around the state. Three of my mates would buy a 660 but the lack of service centres and my experience with the only dealer has put them off. There would be no need to discount the product if they had a few more outlets, as they would sell many more.

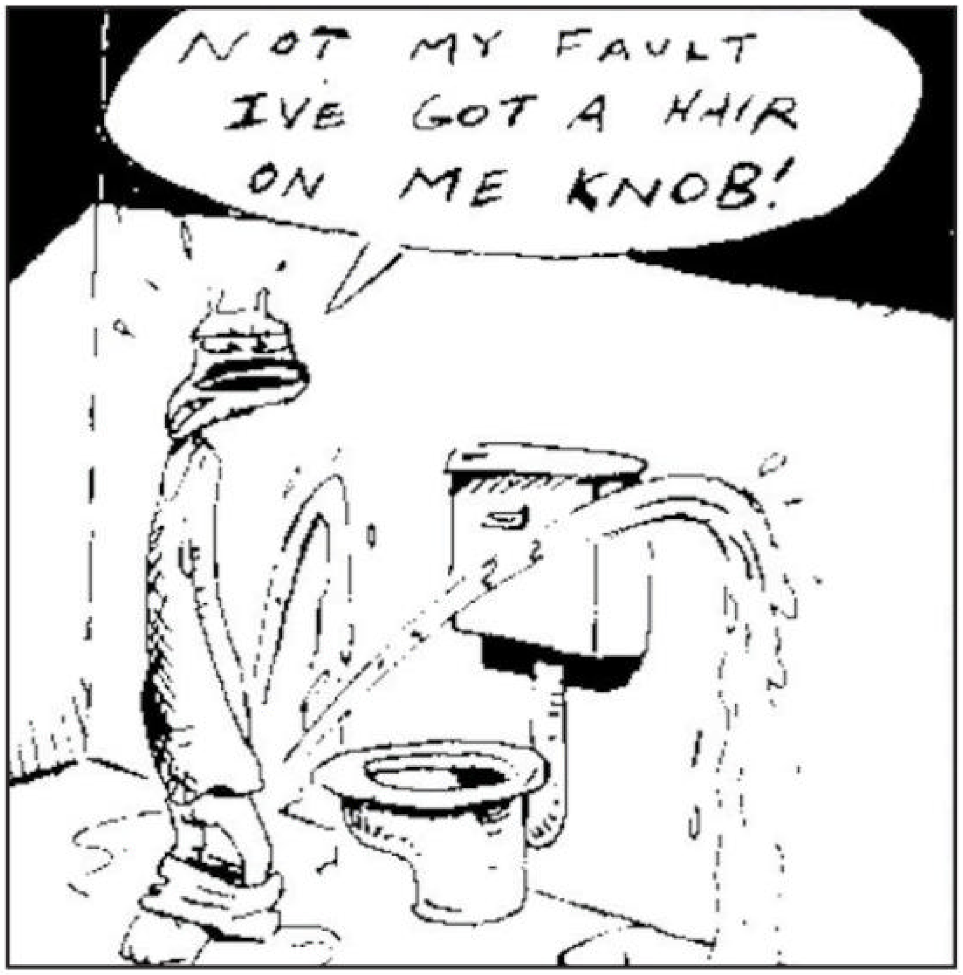
Robert Brittain
via email

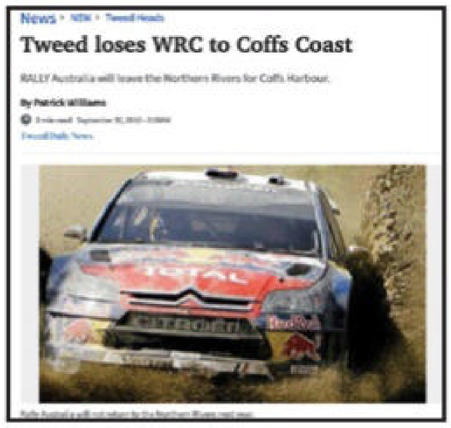
As Australia's distributor for Piaggio Group brands, including Aprilia, Moto Guzzi, Piaggio and Vespa, PS Importers continually seeks opportunities to expand and further develop the retail and service networks of its brands.

If your business is interested in becoming an Aprilia dealer or service agent, please contact PS Importers (aprilia@psimporters.com.au) to discuss further.

Chris Harris
PR and Marketing Manager
PS Importers

APRILIA WOULD SELL MORE BIKES IN WA IF THEY AT LEAST HAD A FEW SERVICE LOCATIONS


NOT MY FAULT IVE GOT A HAIR ON ME KNOB!



News • NSW • Tweed Heads

Tweed loses WRC to Coffs Coast

RALLY Australia will leave the Northern Rivers for Coffs Harbour.

By Patrick Williams

Lout free zone

I'm writing in regards to the venue change for BikeFestOz (AMCN Vol 72 No 16). You may recall that 10 years or so ago the Tweed local government authority prevented a round of the World Rally Championship being held in the region. Some of the locals went to the extent of placing logs across parts of the special sections.

There also used to be an excellent weekend of 'demonstration' runs on the streets of Murwillumbah called Speed on Tweed. This, too, came to a sad end around roughly the same time. At that time a very green mayor and council were in place. It seems as if nothing has changed!

Bruce Thompson
via email

Gassit gear

Hi Deano, I would love to see more Gassit gear. Can you please make sure you accommodate us fat bastards?

Scott McKee
via email

Haha! If we can get the Gassit Gear going again, Scott, we'll definitely make sure there are plenty of 'suitable' sizes for all. Deano

Gassit gear II

Deano, I'm a 70-year-old Gassit fan and would love some new gear, in particular the famous 'Not my fault got a hair on me knob' shirt.

Bill Smithies
via email

Bill, I reckon that was one of my favourite Gassit designs many moons ago. I don't know if I'd get away with it these days though. Deano

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WELCOME TO
WESTERN AUSTRALIA
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Welcome to WA: where's your permit?

Ways of the west

Further to Richard Reed's problem of delivery of AMCN into Western Australia (AMCN Vol 72 No 17). Bear with me here. WA? Yep, I'm familiar. I ride. I also own firearms and compete constantly with a shotgun, rifle and pistol. I'm legal, licensed and all firearms are registered in Queensland.

If I go to WA, I need a special permit if I take three guns to use on a round-the-map trip, but only plan on using one in WA. And then I have to have two permits; one to use, and one to hold and carry (but not use) the others. Strange, but true.

Now the government there has decided to remove "firearms that are capable of long-range accuracy". Obviously our wayward youth plan on robbing shops from a great distance. So what's this got to do with subscriptions or motorcycles? Maybe we can expand the above to cover that other risk to life that is riding motorcycles.

Got a Hayabusa? Sorry can't come to WA. Own a litre sportsbike capable of breaking the speed limit? You need a special permit. WA – why live there? Our beloved grandparents (government) know what's best for us, so suck it up. Gee, now I feel better.

Steve Someone
surname withheld

And I thought there was overreach in NSW! Sounds bloody tough over there in the west, Steve. Deano

British bash

Hey Frothy (Roothy), I think your memory is shot, old man. Now maybe mine's not much better, but I seem to recall the faithful also rode Triumph and BSA in the 1970s – wasn't there something called a Bonnie? I know there was an A65, because I put one of them into the side of a car.

Now they were a bit handy, too, certainly good enough to keep you honest, maybe even park that notorious layshaft of yours in the dunny. What good is all your horses then?

I THINK YOUR MEMORY IS SHOT, OLD MAN. NOW MAYBE MINE'S NOT MUCH BETTER

Hell, I used to blow Nines up and down the Bonang on a 1978 Tiger and that would tail anything with two carbies. The big Lap meant dirt in the 70s, bull dust – as distinct from bullshit – and the big fours, they go splat. Having been flayed halfway around the country, I took a certain grim satisfaction in that too.

Now, if you want to talk Nortons, what about the most gorgeous engine ever made; one cylinder, overhead valve, long stroke, never ever troubled the time keepers, but neat sipping. Ringing any bells? The ES2, now that was a neat pair of pins. So I will let you flash blokes gallop off on your effeminate multis and I will take a rocking horse canter on a good old easy – any day of the week. It had a gearbox too, one up three down, if I remember correctly. Burman was it? No fast changes, but at least it used to keep the internals roughly in position. Kind of handy if you know who on their you know what, take an undue interest in your activities.

Not a lot of fun standing on the edge of the road with a box full of broken teeth and a mouth full of lies, trying to save yourself a few bob.

Still got a bone shaker in the shed, it's no good to me now because I can't hang onto it for long enough to get anywhere – my legs fall asleep and then I can't change gear or use the rear brake. The best bike I ever owned, and it lives chained to a post. I got old before it got fixed. Now I'm going to have to ride some insipid garbage that's actually comfortable. I still can't count to four.

How many good days were there really? What are we talking, half a dozen every 20 years? You know what that thing is I got chained up out there? Proof of stupidity – mine.

Repeated failure to learn precious lessons: oh well. I've still got all my hair – running out of teeth – and I couldn't help notice you're getting a bit thin on top. Tore it all out trying to fix the bloody Commando…

Cliff Waller
Boisdale, Vic

Great debate

Dean, in issue Vol 72 no 16, on the topic of ATGATT, you sided with Phil Johnson in his libertarian war cry of "give me protective clothing freedom or give me death!" Most motorcyclists don't understand just how related those two options are, but that's another story.

In Vicco, the TAC is very good – they must be, I've 'starred' in a couple of

How much riding protection is enough?

> I THINK THERE SHOULD BE A PRESCRIBED MINIMUM STANDARD OF PROTECTIVE MOTORCYCLE GEAR

ads – but even they don't fund everything (and some accidents fall fully outside their cover). So almost every bike accident victim will end up relying to some extent on the good old fall back – the public hospital and healthcare system. Given that you, me and Phil Johnson pay taxes that fund this system (and we all rely heavily on it not being overloaded when we need emergency care for whatever reason), let me beg to differ with both of you.

Every motorcyclist has a social obligation to do what they can to minimise their impact on the healthcare system, including wearing the right gear all the time.

I think there should be a prescribed minimum standard of protective motorcycle gear that is mandatory. If helmets are mandatory, why not boots, gloves, jackets and trousers that meet a minimum legally imposed standard? To me, it's common sense (sadly not something in clear abundance in all motorcyclists). I, for one, live by the ATGATT motto and I wish more would do the same. Love the mag...

Greg Gleason
via email

I applaud your devotion to always wearing protective gear on the bike but I don't believe motocyclists should be burdened with any greater social obligation to minimise the impact on the healthcare system than people who smoke, drink too much, consume a lot of processed sugars or wear thongs. By that logic, we should ban ciggies, beers, fast food and dodgy rubber footwear. Having said that, I always wear full protective gear when riding a motorcycle for AMCN, as do all AMCN contributors and staff, and as you are no doubt aware, we regularly promote the use of good quality protective riding gear in AMCN. Deano

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SOCIALS. WHAT YOU SAID

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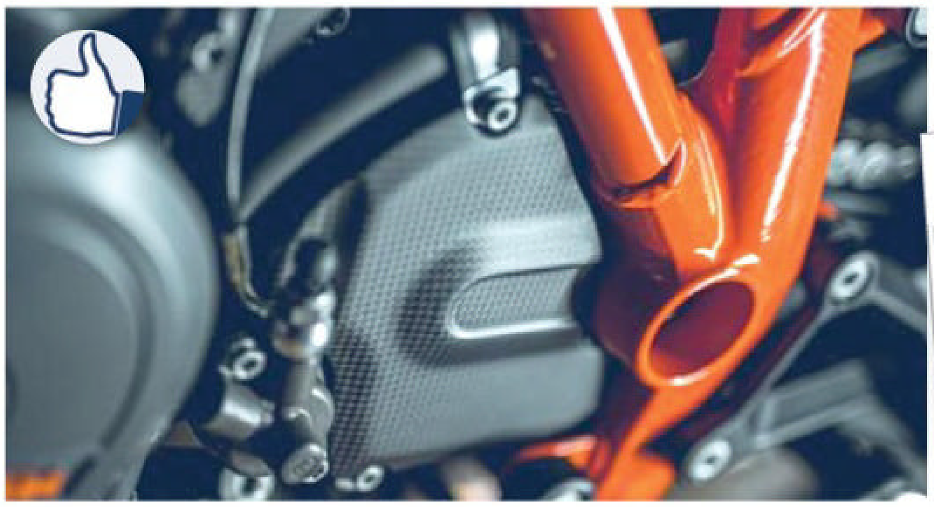
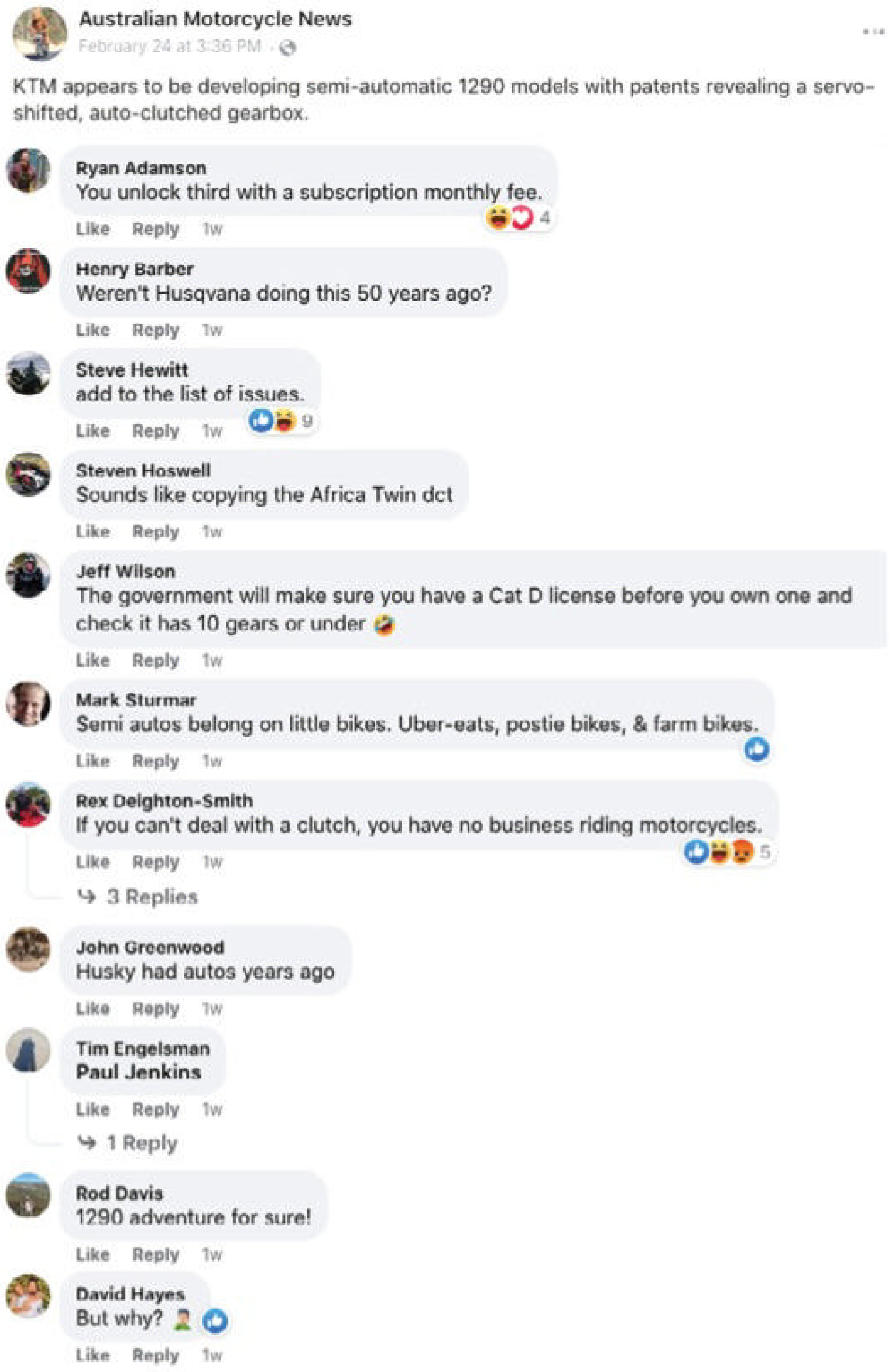


Post of the issue



Australian Motorcycle News
February 24 at 3:36 PM

KTM appears to be developing semi-automatic 1290 models with patents revealing a servo-shifted, auto-clutched gearbox.

Ryan Adamson
You unlock third with a subscription monthly fee.
Like Reply 1w 4

Henry Barber
Weren't Husqvana doing this 50 years ago?
Like Reply 1w

Steve Hewitt
add to the list of issues.
Like Reply 1w 9

Steven Hoswell
Sounds like copying the Africa Twin dct
Like Reply 1w

Jeff Wilson
The government will make sure you have a Cat D license before you own one and check it has 10 gears or under 🤣
Like Reply 1w

Mark Sturmar
Semi autos belong on little bikes. Uber-eats, postie bikes, & farm bikes.
Like Reply 1w

Rex Deighton-Smith
If you can't deal with a clutch, you have no business riding motorcycles.
Like Reply 1w 5
↳ 3 Replies

John Greenwood
Husky had autos years ago
Like Reply 1w

Tim Engelsman
Paul Jenkins
Like Reply 1w
↳ 1 Reply

Rod Davis
1290 adventure for sure!
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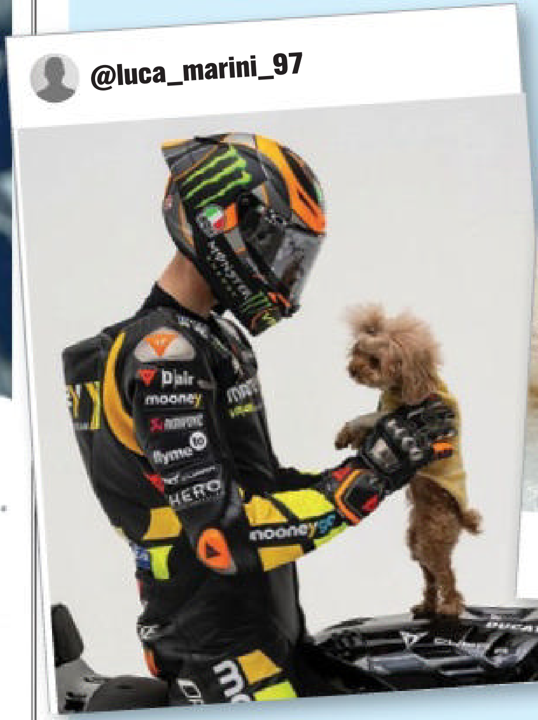
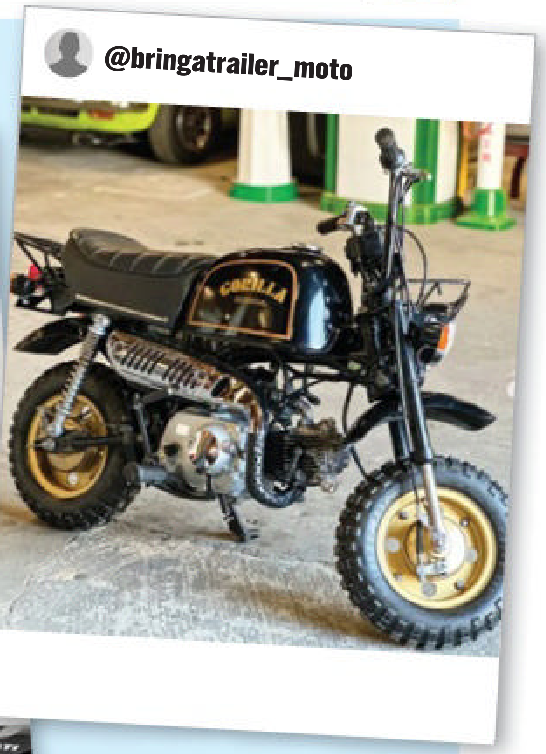
David Hayes
But why? 🤦‍♂️
Like Reply 1w

INSTAGRAM



@luca_marini_97



@bringatrailer_moto

Don't Forget #amcn_mag

Comment of the Issue

Ruth Holfter is happy with Joel Kelso's helmet choice in the 2023 Moto3 world title.

"So glad you've kept the colour on your helmet Joel - makes it easier to follow you in the race"

Reaching out

Want to see your pride and joy featured in AMCN?

The only thing we love more than writing about bikes is looking at your bikes. Tag your social pics with **@aumotorcyclenews** on Facebook or **@amcn_mag** on Instagram, or fire them off in an email to **amcn@amcn.com.au** And don't forget to tell us why you love it.

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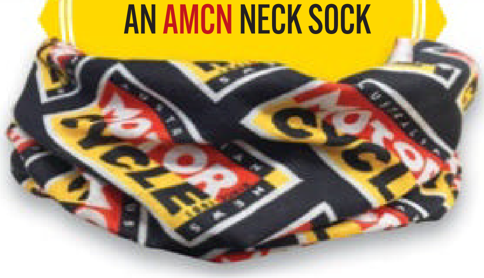
SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

KTM-mounted Jack Miller on the Moto3 grid at the 2014 Malaysian Grand Prix, nearly a decade ago! Spot the five changes made to this image, email us your answers and you may win an AMCN neck sock!

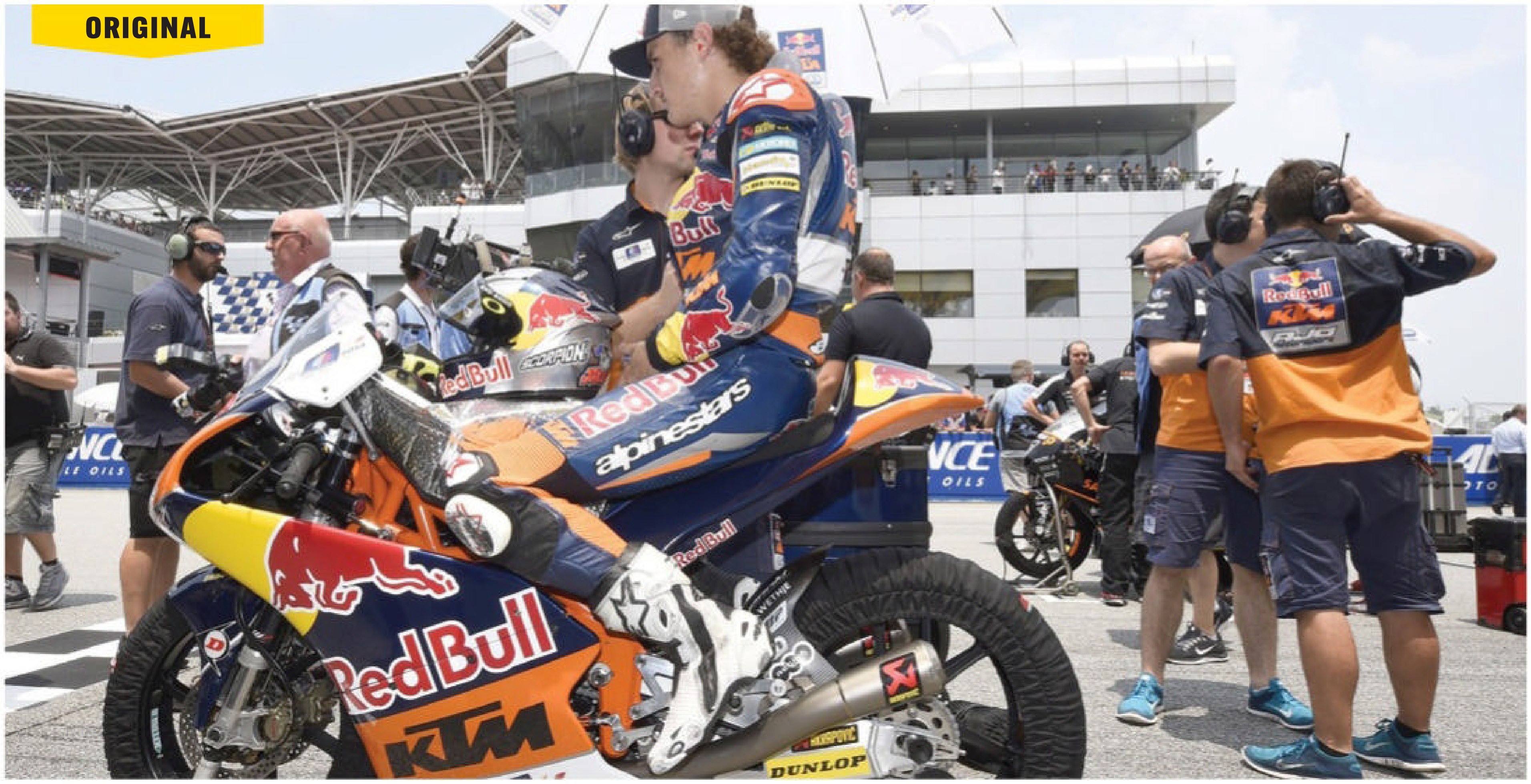
WIN!

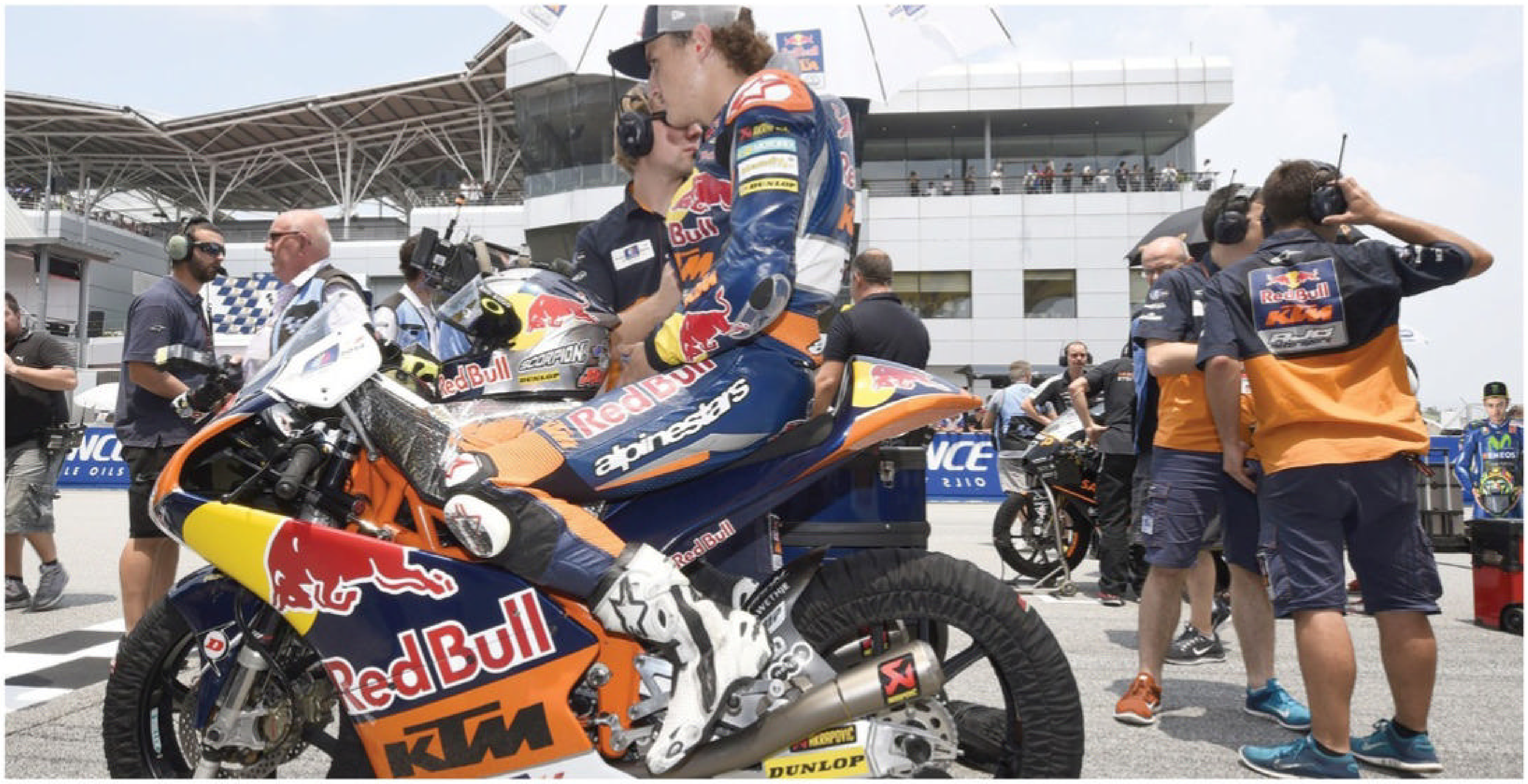
AN AMCN NECK SOCK



EMAIL YOUR ANSWERS AND ADDRESS TO AMCN@AMCN.COM.AU FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN!

ORIGINAL





ANSWERS WILL BE REVEALED IN THE NEXT ISSUE

PROTECTION / FITTING / DESIGN

NEW SUNT EVO 2*

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*Available for Australia world premiere in black only. Other colorways will follow

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WORDS **KEL BUCKLEY**

POWERHOUSES

The Diavel V4 has arrived guns blazing, but Yamaha's V-Max beat it to the V4 cruiser punch nearly **40 years ago**

2016 YAMAHA VMAX

FULL TEST: AMCN VOL 67 NO 02

2023 DUCATI DIAVEL V4

FULL TEST: AMCN VOL 72 NO 16

BACKGROUND

Yamaha debuted the ground-breaking 1200cc V-Max in Las Vegas way back in 1984, trumping anything at the time in terms of grunt and straight-line acceleration. The V4 format was chosen for its echoes of American V8 muscle cars and its 108kW (144hp) peak power figure was unimaginable at the time. It remained relatively unchanged right through to 2009, when it became the 1679cc VMAX and, as a result of increasingly strict emission rules, had quietly disappeared by 2017.

Ducati used the 2010 EICMA Motorcycle Expo in Milan to whip the covers off a concept version of what became the 2011 Ducati Diavel. Powered by the 1198cc Testastretta V-twin, it had many special-edition guises during the next 12 years and received decent engine updates in 2015. The firm added the feet-forward XDiavel in 2016 before increasing the Diavel's capacity to 1262cc in 2019. The current 1158cc V4 version broke cover during the 2022 EICMA Motorcycle Expo.

ENGINE ROOM

The 1679cc 65º V4 engine was fed by fuel injection and employed Yamaha's innovative Yamaha Chip Controlled Intake system which varied the length of the intake trumpets depending on how many revs you fed it. With 147kW (197hp) of power on tap - and 167Nm! - it very nearly became the first production bike to break the 200hp barrier. It did get Yamaha's EXUP valve in the exhaust for more top-end kick, and followed the brand's YZF-R1 and YZF-R6's lead of boasting a ride-by-wire throttle.

The very latest Diavel is powered by Ducati's 1158cc Granturismo V4 which produces a peak power output of 125kW (168hp) at 10,750rpm, with 126Nm of torque peaking over 3000rpm earlier at 7500rpm. Of course, a full suite of electronics complements the V4, including four switchable riding modes and a swag of rider aids which are actuated by a six-axis IMU which allows the systems to determine the level of intervention based on speed, roll, yaw, pitch and lean angle of the bike.

NUTS AND BOLTS

In its final iteration, all of that VMAX grunt was transferred to the 200-section 18-inch rear tyre via a five-speed gearbox and shaft final drive. It needed plenty of stopping power, which came in the form of a pair of six-piston Brembo calipers up front and a single-piston caliper at the rear, while the wheelbase was a long 1699mm. It was suspended on a 52mm right-way up fork matched to a remote-reservoir rear shock, both which offered full adjustability.

The V4 Diavel opts for sportsbike-like 17-inch hoops, albeit it with a wide 240-section rear tyre. Power is shuffled through a six-speed 'box and chain final drive. It boasts a 1593mm wheelbase and is suspended on a fully adjustable 50mm Marzocchi upside-down fork, matched to a fully adjustable monoshock at the rear. Braking is by way of Brembo's top-shelf four-piston Stylema calipers at the front and a twin-piston affair at the rear, and includes cornering ABS.

SPECS

2016 Yamaha VMAX	MODEL	2023 Ducati Diavel V4
1679cc V4	ENGINE	1158cc V4
147kW (197hp) @ 9000rpm	POWER	125kW (170hp) @ 10,750rpm
167Nm @ 6600rpm	TORQUE	126Nm @ 7500rpm
310kg (wet)	WEIGHT	236kg (wet)
775mm	SEAT HEIGHT	790mm
15L	FUEL CAPACITY	20L
$31,299 (plus ORC, 2015)	PRICE	$41,100 (ride away)
Discontinued	AVAILABILITY	Now

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KLX110R L
(MANUAL CLUTCH)

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ELECTRIC STARTING | HIGH-TENSILE STEEL BACKBONE FRAME
LONG STROKE SUSPENSION (KLX110R L) | CENTRIFUGAL CLUTCH (KLX110R)

KLX110R | KLX110RL

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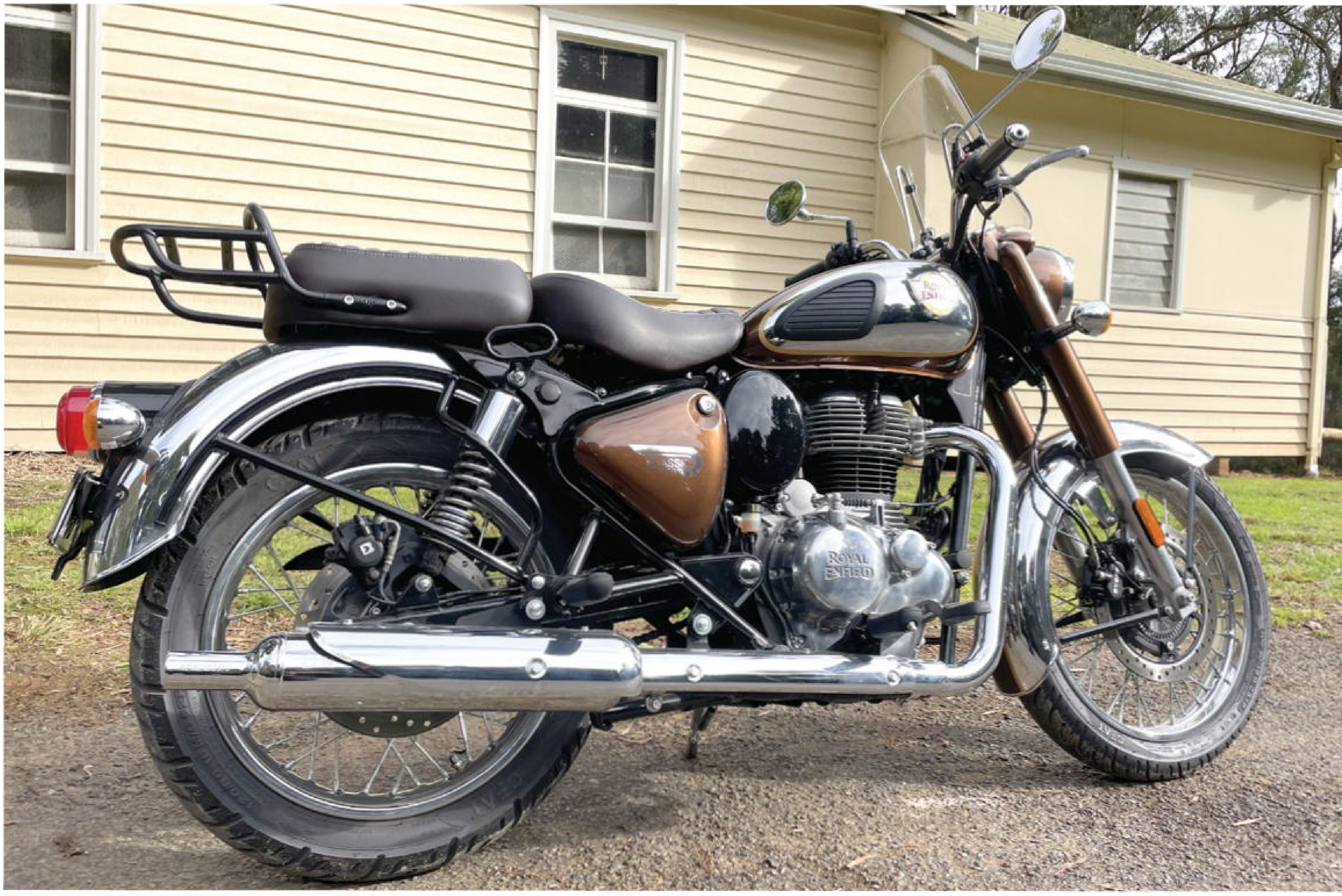


TEST **DEAN MELLOR** + PHOTOGRAPHY **AMCN ARCHIVES**

BYE BYE BROWNIE

After a few months in the shed it's time to wave goodbye to AMCN's long-term Royal Enfield Classic 350 Chrome

It's time to say goodbye to the Royal Enfield Classic 350, which we originally put on the AMCN Living With fleet in July of last year, not long after the bike's local launch. That launch was held on the hills outside of Melbourne and, from all reports, it was a fast-paced affair. That is not what the Classic 350 is all about, so we thought we'd grab one for a few months and subject it to some more sedate cruising.

Well, cruising is how our time the Classic started out. Kel selected a few accessories to have fitted to the bike – rider and pillion touring seats, a rear rack and a touring windshield – and then she used it for local rides not far from home, reporting that for duties such as commuting in an urban environment it was more than comfortable and capable enough. As Kel said in her initial report (AMCN Vol 72 No 02), "… with 15kW of power at 6100rpm and 27Nm of torque at 4000rpm from a machine that weights 195kg, cruising is definitely where it's at."

But with plenty of other bikes to test, Kel reckoned the Classic 350 wasn't getting the use it deserved… so when Pete found himself down in Victoria and needing a bike to ride back to Sydney, once again the Classic 350 would find itself outside of its comfort zone. At the time, Pete claimed to weigh in at 110kg, and with a week's worth of luggage to strap down to the little RE

RIDER PROFILES

Name Kel Buckley
Height 164cm
Weight 63kg

Name Pete Vorst
Height 186cm
Weight 110kg

Name Dean Mellor
Height 167cm
Weight 78kg

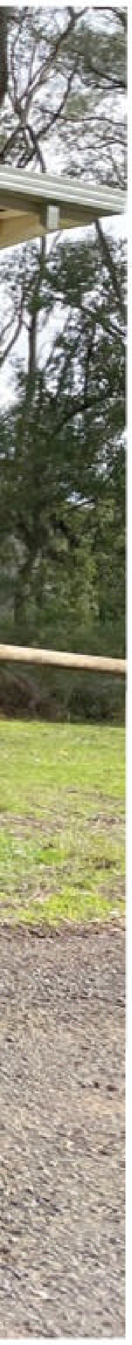
1. Deano cajoled his wife into her first pillion ride in more than a decade!

2. The touring seat was one of the first accessories

3. PV enjoyed his interstate blast

4. The touring screen was fitted and then ditched by Deano

Retail price $8790 (ride away)	Distance covered **2102km**	**Fuel Economy** 3.4L/100km	**Servicing** First: 1000km Minor: 10,000km Major: 20,000km. **Warranty** Three years, unlimited km



it would have its work cut out. Pete reckoned on the open road it was in its happy place between 80 and 90km/h, and that the touring screen and touring seat made the ride more than bearable, saying (AMCN Vol 72 No 08), “... the touring seat is lounge-chair good.”

Pete was also impressed by the Classic 350’s riding position, commenting, “It may be ‘just’ a 350, but it’s quite a roomy ride even for my large frame. It’s got big bike feels, especially the claimed 195kg kerb weight which... adds to the stability and means the Classic isn’t skipping all over the joint when negotiating the appalling and often dangerous back road currently on the east coast.”

After hearing Kel and Pete’s thoughts on the Classic 350, I was keen to sample it for myself, especially after I spotted it in Pete’s backyard one afternoon. I reckon it looks grouse, with its classic lines and all that chrome, so I loaded it on to the trailer and brought it back to my place.

On one of my first highway runs on the Classic 350, I managed to eke 110km/h out of it, but I agreed with Kel and Pete (AMCN Vol 72 No 11) that it’s “349cc air-cooled single is better suited to cruising secondary roads at 80 or 90 clicks than fanging up freeways at 110km/h”.

While I found the touring seat to be supremely comfortable, I wasn’t a fan of the touring screen, which seemed to direct a buffeting airflow right at my noggin, so I dug out the Allen keys and whipped it off (the screen, that is). Not only was the buffeting gone, but I reckoned the bike looked much better without the screen fitted.

UP UNTIL THEN, SHE HADN’T BEEN ON THE BACK OF A BIKE FOR MORE THAN 12 YEARS

There’s certainly nothing intimidating about the look of the Classic 350, proven by my wife Renata agreeing to hop on the pillion seat and join me for a ride (AMCN Vol 72 No 16). Up until then, she hadn’t been on the back of a bike for more than 12 years. She reported that it was comfortable, and she liked the fact that she wasn’t perched too high like she remembered from years gone by on the back of sportsbikes.

As for performance, I stated at the time, “... even with two people aboard, it is happy to chug along at a decent clip... for a leisurely weekend two-up ride it’s just the ticket.”

One of the reasons we conduct long-term bike tests is so we can report on the opinions of various riders, and everyone who rode the 350 Classic agreed that it was a fun little cruiser with a big-bike feel... so long as you’re not in too much of a hurry.

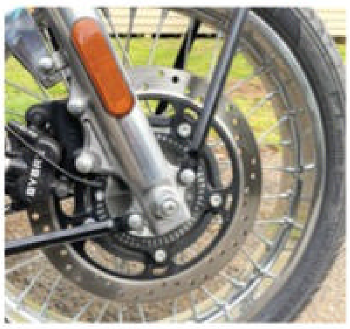
There were no mechanical issues with the bike during its AMCN tenure and, with a spit and polish, it looked as shiny and new the day it went back to Royal Enfield as the day we picked it up.

Right. What’s next?

2

3

4



OPTIONS ADDED

Touring seat	$610
Pillion seat	$160
Rear rack	$160
Touring screen (removed)	$200

TEST **ADAM CHILD** + PHOTOGRAPHY **AMIE MORRIS**

MONSTER HIGH

Ducati's 937cc nakedbike is the latest in the line-up to cop the SP treatment

Ducati's first Monster arrived 30 years ago, back in 1993. I fondly remember seeing it in magazines for the first time, a refreshingly simple and classy naked with that familiar trellis chassis and an air-cooled V-twin engine. It was minimalist and in principle just a collection of bits from the Ducati parts bin – but it worked. This was excellent news for Ducati, as the Monster helped the Italian firm through difficult financial times.

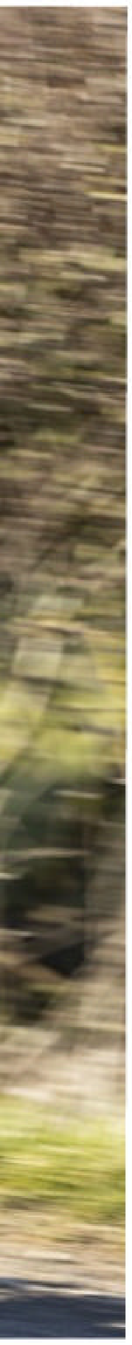
I've ridden almost every incarnation of the Monster, from air- to water-cooled and rode my own early Monster 600 to Italy when I was young enough not to know better. Now all those trellis frames and air-cooled engines are long gone because Ducati only produces one Monster, launched in 2021 which uses the 82kW (111hp) 937cc Testastretta V-twin engine. Well, until now at least, because the much-anticipated Monster SP, new for 2023, has been launched.

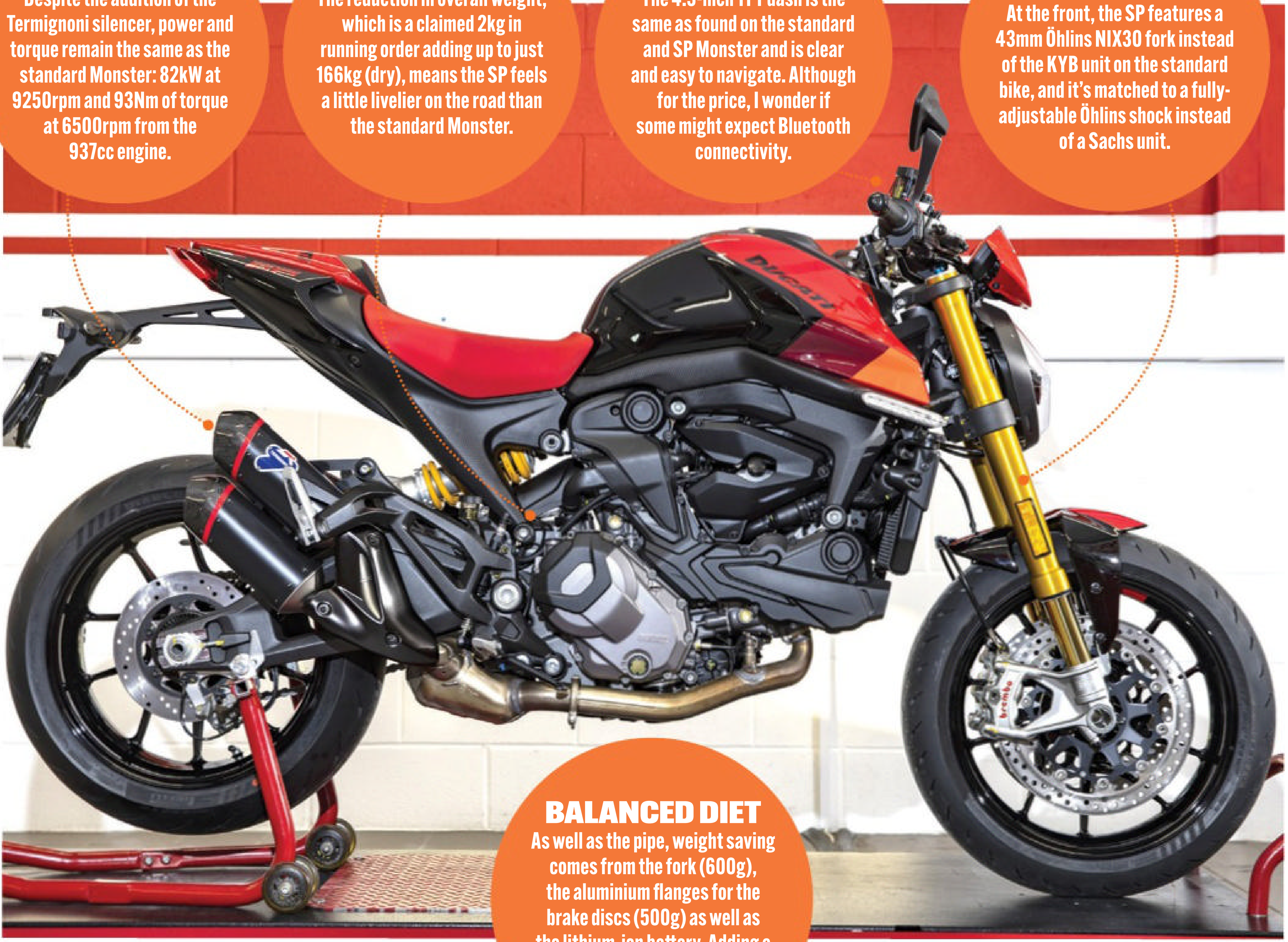
1. A new steering damper, which is easy to adjust

2. Trick Brembo Stylema brakes stop the Monster SP on a dime

3. The Termignoni exhaust is just for aesthetics and sound, but it handles the brief beautifully

4. The 937cc Testastretta twin gets up and boogies





BARK, NO BITE

Despite the addition of the Termignoni silencer, power and torque remain the same as the standard Monster: 82kW at 9250rpm and 93Nm of torque at 6500rpm from the 937cc engine.

GET UP & GO

The reduction in overall weight, which is a claimed 2kg in running order adding up to just 166kg (dry), means the SP feels a little livelier on the road than the standard Monster.

CONNECT FOR

The 4.3-inch TFT dash is the same as found on the standard and SP Monster and is clear and easy to navigate. Although for the price, I wonder if some might expect Bluetooth connectivity.

IN SUSPENS-ION

At the front, the SP features a 43mm Öhlins NIX30 fork instead of the KYB unit on the standard bike, and it's matched to a fully-adjustable Öhlins shock instead of a Sachs unit.

BALANCED DIET

As well as the pipe, weight saving comes from the fork (600g), the aluminium flanges for the brake discs (500g) as well as the lithium-ion battery. Adding a steering damper must have put a little weight back on.

The Monster SP doesn't get lighter wheels like other SP models in Ducati's range (see sidebar), but it does benefit from Öhlins suspension at both ends, improved Brembo Stylema brakes, a decrease in weight that's mainly due to a lighter lithium-ion battery, and a road-legal Termignoni silencer which, incidentally, doesn't improve performance – it's simply added for aesthetic and sound reasons.

Power continues the same as the standard Monster, but there are other small but significant tweaks such as new steering damper and Pirelli Diablo Rosso IV rubber instead of Rosso III. There's also exclusive styling, including a small fly screen and that attractive SP-only livery.

The on-paper performance figures may not impress your mates who own 150kW-plus superbikes, but the real word on-road performance feels larger than its 82kW peak promises – you don't have to chase revs to have fun. It's refreshing to jump on a Ducati twin and

I RODE MY OWN EARLY MONSTER 600 TO ITALY WHEN I WAS YOUNG ENOUGH NOT TO KNOW BETTER

4

1. So flickable and tactile: the SP hits the handling mark

2. Left-hand switchblock houses the mode switch

3. Adam did turn off wheelie control early in proceedings...

4. Fully adjustable Öhlins suspension at both ends

rely on that mid- to low-down punch which the Italian brand is famous for. The Euro 5-approved Termignoni silencer adds a welcome bark, too, which amplifies the feeling of a sportier and faster bike. I've missed the sound of a Ducati twin – it sure is lovely.

I was a little anxious the SP might feel underpowered compared to the strong and more powerful competition from KTM and Triumph. But turn off the wheelie control, head out into the twisties and the Monster comes alive. Because there's a liberating sense of being able to use all of it, not simply tickling the margins of its ability. It's not a toy exactly but you, the rider, are definitely the boss. It loves some one-wheeled action and, because the power delivery is smooth and easy, it's not intimidating when you decide to do so. Simply jump on and have fun.

Even in its full-fat format the SP's fueling is sweetly soft, and the carefully packaged riding modes – Sport, Road and Wet – plus a plethora of Ducati rider aids help keep you safe.

When it comes to the handling you can see

NUDE BROOD

KTM 890 Duke R

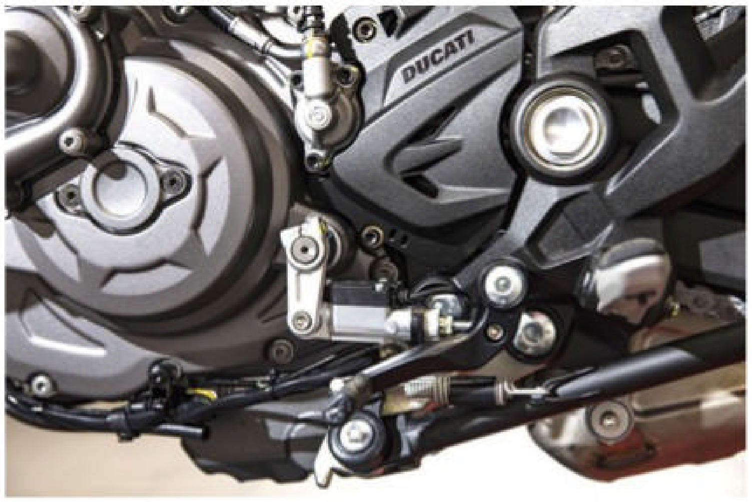
889cc parallel twin
166kg (dry)
$19,840 (ride away)

Triumph Street Triple 765 RS

765cc inline triple
188kg (wet)
$20,590 (ride away)

Yamaha MT-09 SP

890cc inline triple
190kg (wet)
$18,099 (ride away)



A TWO-KILO WEIGHT LOSS ISN'T A PARTICULARLY SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE, BUT ON THE ROAD IT FEELS LIKE ONE

where the money has been spent, with Öhlins front and rear. The SP sits a little higher, with the seat height increased by 20mm to 840mm. And sitting the bike slightly higher should, in theory, increase ground clearance, allowing a greater lean angle.

A two-kilo weight loss isn't a particularly substantial change, but on the road it feels like one. The SP is so flickable and effortless to throw around that it feels smaller and lighter than it is. It beseeches you to have fun and turns noticeably quicker and easier than the standard bike, which is by no means a reluctant cornerer itself. The taller riding position gives the Monster an aggressive edge, too, but not overpowering.

The feeling from the Öhlins is exceptional. The ride quality is plush and comfortable; sporty without behaving like a near-rigid sportsbike on the road. Even bumpy backroads at speed don't overwhelm the suspension. Usually, light quick-steering bikes feel a little nervous at speed and on dodgy surfaces, but the Ducati feels sure-footed at all times, which might partially be down to the new steering damper. It's also easy to adjust, should you add a pillion or ride on especially rough terrain.

Ducati claims to have improved ground clearance and, although we had dry and warm-ish conditions I can't categorically comment on how far. Same with the new rubber: I'm unsure how much more the Rosso IV delivers compared to the older Rosso III.

The standard Brembo M4.32 Monster stoppers are quality items, but Ducati has gone one step further by adorning the SP with the top-shelf Stylema calipers. Race-spec brakes on a lightweight nakedbike result in immensely potent stopping power, supported by Ducati's excellent cornering ABS.

On the road you only need one finger on the lever to haul up this lightweight firecracker, and at slow speeds they are not too aggressive either. Equally, take the SP on track, turn off the rear ABS and you will be stunned by how late you can brake. In fact, with race-spec brakes, a quality Öhlins fork and so few kilos to slow, the SP will shame a few sportsbikes on the stoppers.

The added flyscreen is a token gesture, more a styling exercise than anything else, as it offers little protection. The Monster is on the small side, and I can see riders over six-foot tall opting

for the taller seat in the accessories catalogue, which offers 10mm more to 850mm.

The Monster was never designed for serious touring, but the riding position is relaxed, especially when compared to earlier Monsters, which were a little more radical. I'd take on a long day in the saddle without too many concerns. However you're never going to have endless hours in the saddle, anyway, as the 14-litre fuel tank and fuel consumption of around 4.7L/100km will empty that tank in around 240 kays. You'll be looking for fuel at around the 180km mark, depending on how badly you've been behaving.

On the road, the SP is pure fun and comes without trace of ego or intimidation. It's not over-complicated and delivers meaty V-twin power as well as a little more bark from its Termignoni pipe. It's so light and flickable; it stops, turns and then goes so instinctively that you can just jump on and have fun.

There are excellent rider aids there in the background, which new riders will love, but as the mechanical grip and feedback are so good you could argue that, aside from the smooth quickshifter, they are not needed.

Ducati has taken the excellent standard Monster and added even more appeal and versatility, with improved lightweight handling and stopping power, while at the same time adding even more desirability. The Monster SP turned out to be a pleasant surprise. Actually, it was much more than pleasant. I thought that it might feel a little flat compared to the harder-punching competition but was delighted to discover on the road, the Monster SP will be a genuine match for the other middleweight sportsnakeds.

The only downside is price. At $23,200 (ride away), the Monster SP is more expensive than the competition with similar spec and greater power. But for many, the competition will not have the desirability and kudos of an SP-branded Ducati.

PIMP YOUR RIDE

Ducati can't help itself; can't resist the temptation to take a relatively restrained model and pimp it into premium SP spec.

SP DUCATIS have always equated to something a little special, and still do today. The usual process involves taking the base model and adding premium suspension and brakes and reducing weight - which is precisely what it has done with the Monster SP.

SP models are still sought after today, and the Monster SP is the 'entry-level' SP. But if you want something a little different, Ducati's Hypermotard is available in SP livery ($28,900) and shares the same 937 Testastretta as the Monster.

Above that, you are going to have to dig deep, with the Ducati Streetfighter V4 SP2 ($48,400) and Panigale V4 SP2 ($56,900) significantly costlier SP models.

SPECS

ENGINE
Capacity 937cc
Type 90° Testastretta V-twin, four valves per cylinder
Bore & stroke 94mm x 67.5mm
Compression ratio 13.3:1
Cooling Liquid
Fueling EFI, 2 x 53mm throttle bodies
Transmission Six-speed with quickshifter
Clutch Wet, multi-plate, slipper type
Final drive Chain

PERFORMANCE
Power 82kW (111hp) @ 9250rpm (claimed)
Torque 93Nm @ 6500rpm (claimed)
Top speed 225km/h (est)
Fuel consumption 4.9L/100km (measured)

ELECTRONICS
Type Ducati
Rider aids Cornering ABS, traction control, wheelie control, launch control and a two-way quickshifter
Rider modes Sport, Road and Wet

CHASSIS
Frame material Aluminium alloy
Frame type Front frames
Rake 23°
Trail 87mm
Wheelbase 1472mm

SUSPENSION
Type Öhlins
Front: 43mm upside-down fork, fully adjustable, 140mm travel
Rear: Monoshock, fully adjustable, 150mm travel

WHEELS & BRAKES
Wheels Cast alloy
Front: 17 x 3.5 Rear: 17 x 5.5
Tyres Pirelli Diablo Rosso IV
Front: 120/70ZR17
Rear: 180/50ZR17
Brakes Brembo
Front: Twin 330mm discs, four-piston Stylema calipers
Rear: Single 245mm disc, twin-piston caliper

DIMENSIONS
Weight 186kg (kerb, claimed)
Seat height 840mm
Width Not given
Height Not given
Length Not given
Ground clearance Not given
Fuel capacity 14L

SERVICING & WARRANTY
Servicing First: 1000km
Minor: 15,000km
Major: 30,000km
Warranty Two years, unlimited kilometres

BUSINESS END
Price $23,200 (ride away)
Colour SP livery

CONTACT
www.ducati.com/au/en

PROS AND CONS

👍 Ducati rarely misses the mark with its SPs, and the Monster is no exception. A genuine naked firecracker.

👎 A little pricey compared to the opposition in similar spec, and taller riders will be forking out more for the taller seat.

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TEST **DEAN MELLOR** + PHOTOGRAPHY **DEAN WALTERS**

TWO-WAY STREET

Triple treat for road and track. Triumph's sixth-generation Street Triple is better **in every way**

If you think too much power is never enough, you obviously haven't tasted a new Triumph Street Triple 765 RS. Sure, compared to litre-class machines, this midsize naked makes a relatively modest 96kW (128hp), but thanks to a broad spread of torque throughout the rev range, peaking at a handy 80Nm at 9500rpm, on the road it rarely feels as though it's lacking in the grunt department.

Big claim, for sure, but I feel reasonably qualified to make it, doing so just a couple of weeks after testing way more potent litre-class (and above) nakedbikes, including the 147kW (197hp) Kawasaki Z

H2, the 129kW (173hp) Aprilia Tuono Factory V4 and Triumph's own 132kW (177hp) Speed Triple RS (see next issue for details).

But seriously, how much power do you really need for road riding? Even if one day you found yourself on a quiet bit of tarmac in the middle of nowhere, and you thought to yourself, 'Fuggit... let's see what this thing'll do!', the Street Triple 765 RS will (hypothetically, of course) respond with a speed-limited 240km/h, and it'll be no slouch in getting there. In fact, the only scenario in which I can envisage anyone wanting more power for the road is if they were chasing their mates on bigger, more powerful bikes... on long, open straights.

But then the Street Triple RS rider would likely claw back any lost ground as soon as the road started to tighten up. Corners? Yes please! The RS eats 'em for brekky.

Triumph says there's plenty of Moto2 tech in the latest 765cc triple, thanks to the company's involvement in supplying engines for the intermediate world championship. Compared to the previous Street Triple, compression ratio is up 4.7 percent from 12.65:1 to 13.25:1, there are revised combustion chambers, new pistons and conrods, and new valves and camshafts. Power and torque are both up (5kW and 4Nm respectively) and, thanks partially to revised gearbox ratios resulting in lower overall gearing, so is engine responsiveness.

Triumph is keen to point out how racing improves the breed, not just when it comes to performance, but also reliability; it claims that the 765cc triple has been subjected to more than one million kilometres of racing in various categories around the world, including Moto2, IoM TT racing, various supersport categories and more. Not a bad testbed at all.

There's little doubt the 765cc triple is a fantastic power unit with loads of character and a fabulous soundtrack, thanks to its distinctive induction roar

1. FULL STOP

The Street Triple RS is equipped with top-spec Brembo Stylema four-piston radial monobloc front calipers and a Brembo MCS span and ratio adjustable lever allowing you to tailor brake feel and response to suit your needs and riding environment.

2. MIX 'N' MATCH

The RS sports a Showa 41mm USD big-piston fork up front and an Öhlins rear shock with a remote reservoir. Both ends are fully adjustable for preload, compression and rebound. The lower-grade Street Triple R gets Showa kit front and rear and the Moto2 Edition gets Öhlins front and rear.

3. CLEVER STUFF

The electronics package is comprehensive and includes five ride modes (Rain, Road, Sport, Track and Rider configurable), as well as cornering ABS and TC, up and down quickshifter, wheelie control and more.

4. PILLION FRIENDLY?

The rear seat cowl (pictured) can be swapped over for a pillion seat that is provided as a standard accessory with the Street Triple RS. There were no such pillion seats to sample at the launch, but we were told they weren't particularly large... nor comfortable.

5. POWER TO THE PEOPLE

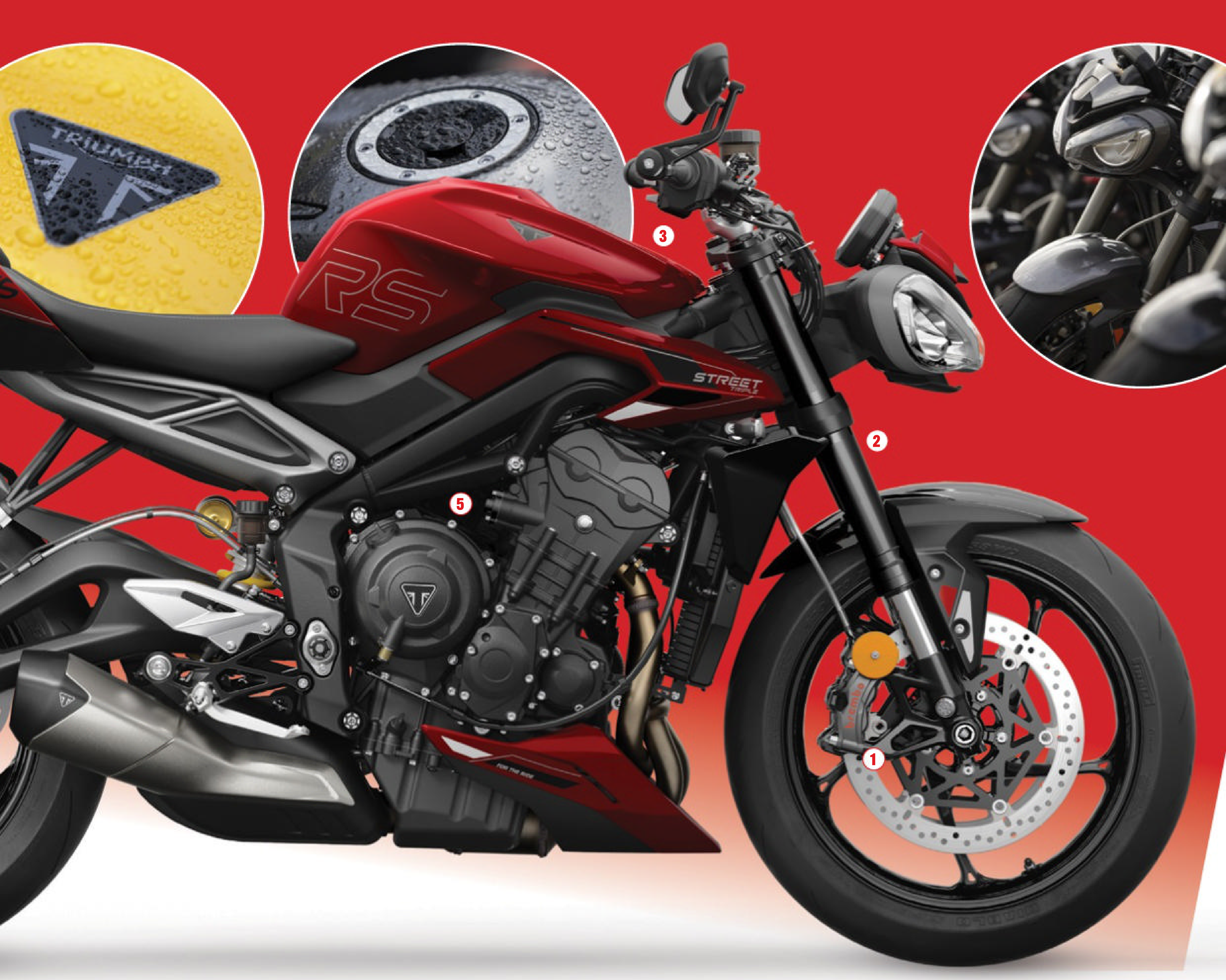
The inline triple used in the Street Triple RS and Moto2 Edition now produces a claimed 96.5kW (128.2hp) of power at a heady 12,000rpm, up 5kW (7hp) on the previous model. There's 80Nm of torque at 9500rpm.

1. You want engine character? The 765 RS is overflowing with it

2. Taut taillight

3. The ultimate back-roads blaster

4. The full-colour five-inch TFT screen is tailorable for different displays, but it can be a bit fussy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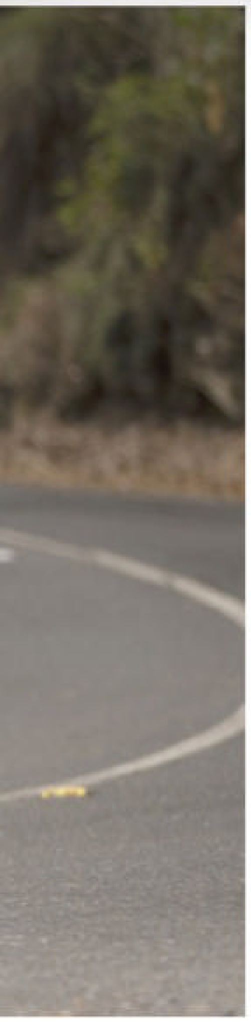
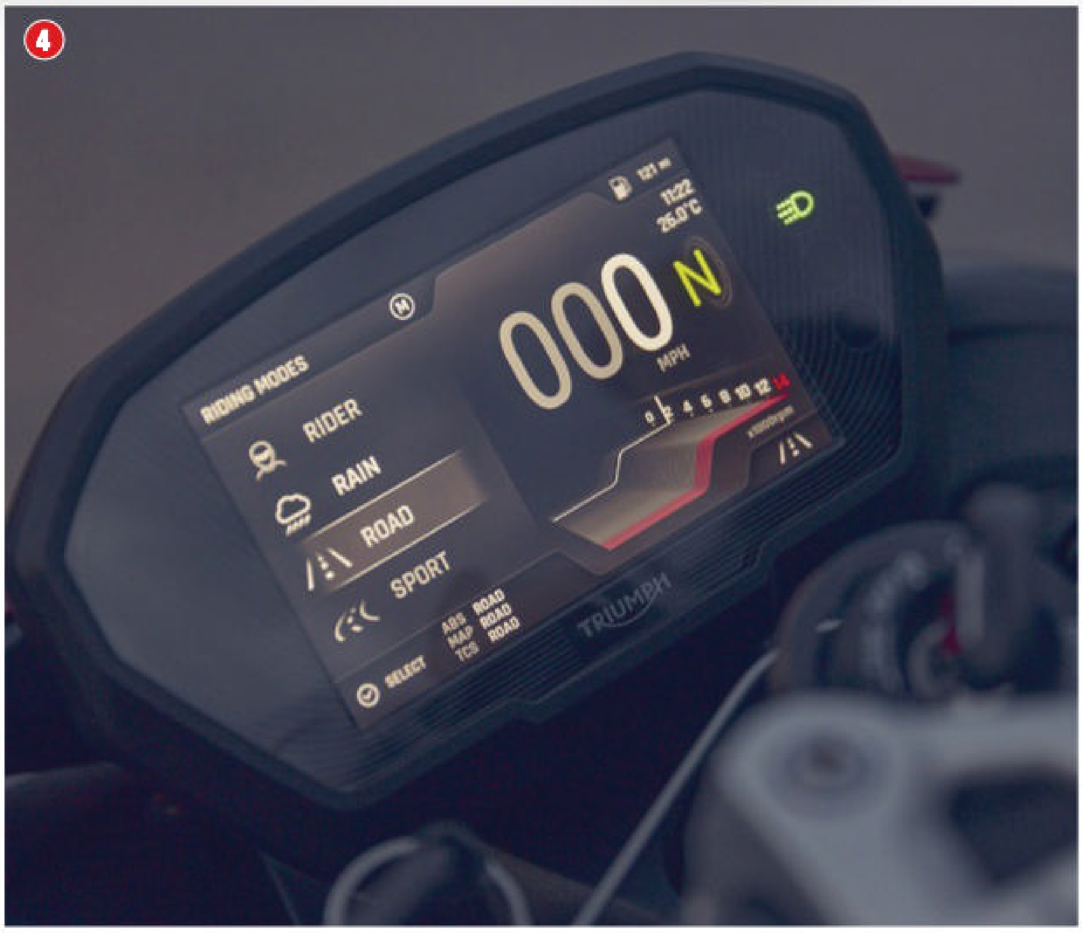
STREET TRIPLE
RS



and tasty exhaust note. As well as a potent top-end, it offers a meaty midrange that allows you to pull high gears from as low as 5000rpm, but it's in the upper third of the rev range where things really start to happen. And thanks to the lower gearing, the tacho races towards redline with urgency once you crack the throttle wide open.

The engine is mated to a slick-shifting six-speed gearbox, and flicking through the ratios is a joy thanks to the super-responsive Shift Assist quickshifter. There's barely an interruption to ignition on upshifts and the Shift Assist allows for super-fast downshifts, while a slipper clutch ensures there's no lock up when banging down through the ratios. When you choose to use the

CORNERS? YES PLEASE! THE RS EATS 'EM FOR BREKKY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RIDING MODES
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TRIUMPH

clutch, it is light and progressive, and has an adjustable-span lever.

There are five riding modes: Rain, Road, Sport, Track and Rider configurable. The Rain mode dulls throttle response significantly and restricts peak output to just 74kW (99hp), and on the launch ride we had ample opportunity to test it thanks to some wet sections through the Adelaide Hills. While the standard Pirelli Diablo Supercorsa SP V3 tyres offer loads of grip in the dry, they don't have a helluva lot of tread near the sidewalls for expelling water, and on some slippery sections I could feel the cornering TC doing its thing when exiting bumpy corners. The Road mode gives access to full power but with road-focused settings for throttle response and the intervention from the ABS and TC systems. While there is no more power available in Sport mode, there's a more aggressive throttle map and less TC intervention. The throttle mapping in Track mode is the same as in Sport mode, but the ABS and TC intervention levels are further reduced. In the Rider configurable mode, you can select between Rain, Road and Sport throttle maps; Road and Track ABS intervention; and Rain, Sport, Track and Off TC intervention. It should be noted that switching the TC off also deactivates the linked braking system.

The braking package on the Street Triple RS is simply phenomenal thanks to the top-spec Brembo Stylema setup. Not only is there incredible stopping power from the four-piston radial monobloc front calipers gripping a pair of 310mm ventilated discs, but braking response can also be tailored to suit your preference or the riding environment thanks to the MCS span- and ratio-adjustable lever. For more reactive braking, simply wind up the number on the dial.

2
ÖHLINS
TRIUMPH

I SWEAR... I ALMOST NEEDED BEX AND A LIE DOWN AFTER

The rear-end runs a 220mm ventilated disc with a single-piston caliper and it offers good feel and control, while the linked-braking setup is barely noticeable when riding, although no doubt adds to braking performance and stability.

I only felt the ABS intervention on the road on one occasion, when a bloody great big kangaroo came bounding across the road right in front of me; I swear, it dwarfed the Street Triple and I almost needed Bex and a lie down after the close encounter. When I hit the picks to avoid it, the bike pulled up straight and true, and both the 'roo and I continued on our merry way.

Triumph has tweaked the riding position on the 2023 Street Triple RS to give it a sportier feel. This has been achieved by raising the rear-end of the bike and giving it a steeper rake, so you feel as though you are sitting over the front of the bike more than the previous model. The handlebar width has also been increased by 12mm, resulting

SECOND OPINION

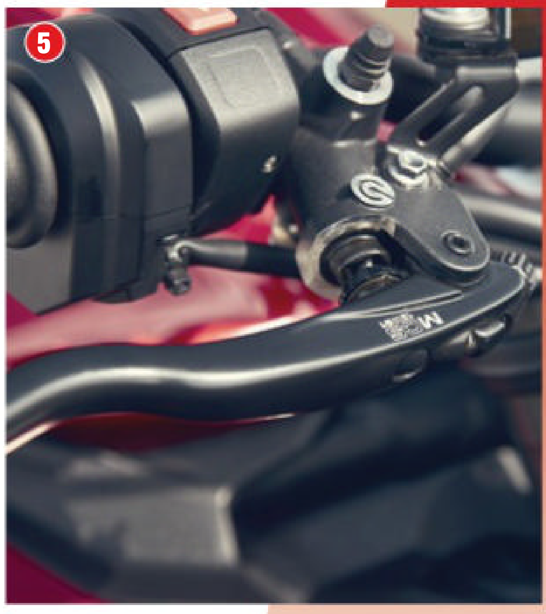
Adam Child

To improve the old/current 2022 Street Triple was a difficult task, but Triumph has. The new RS is sportier, livelier, racier, more aggressive and so good around Jerez I want to fit some cheap bodywork and race it. Tweak the suspension and it's a true track tool with a comfortable seat and relaxed riding position. It's so good, it in part at least, fills in that large gap left by true supersport bikes.

Triumph hasn't sacrificed any of the Street Triple's road-going prowess in the process. It's still an excellent everyday machine that is easy to ride, terrific fun in town, sounds wonderful and looks great. Build quality is noticeably good, too, and $20,590 for the RS feels more than reasonable value. After all, not many bikes can commute to work in the week, excel on B-roads on Saturday, then tear up the fast group on a trackday on Sunday – not for around $20k, anyway.

There are niggles. The RS rev counter is hard to read on track when you have very little time to glance down, and the conventional mirrors on the R are preferable to the 'bar-end items on the RS. But I'm really struggling to find any major faults with the RS, which retains the qualities of the previous bike while gaining a little more in almost every area. Looking at the competition, I think it's the leader in the middleweight naked class and, like the old bike, the one I'll be recommending to mates. I can't wait to try the Moto2 version which promises to be hugely impressive.

If you're not going to ride on track then you're better off with the R version, and you'll save yourself over two grand in the process. It may lack the RS's wow factor but it's still immensely capable.



1. Are you looking at me?

2. Öhlins rear suspension, mated to a Showa fork

3. The 765 RS is livelier, sportier – and even more fun than ever!

4. Fully adjustable suspension befitting its naked sports status

5. Span- and ratio-adjustable Brembo Stylema brakes

TAKIN' IT TO THE STREET

TRIUMPH STREET TRIPLE R	DUCATI MONSTER SP	KTM 890 DUKE R	YAMAHA MT-09SP
ENGINE 765cc triple	**ENGINE** 937cc V-twin	**ENGINE** 889cc parallel-twin	**ENGINE** 889cc triple
POWER 88.3kW	**POWER** 82kW	**POWER** 89kW	**POWER** 87.5kW
TORQUE 80Nm	**TORQUE** 93Nm	**TORQUE** 99Nm	**TORQUE** 93Nm
WEIGHT 189kg (wet)	**WEIGHT** 186kg (wet)	**WEIGHT** 166kg (dry)	**WEIGHT** 190kg (wet)
$18,090 (ride away)	$23,200 (ride away)	$19,840 (ride away)	$18,099 (ride away)

in quicker turn-in and making the bike easier to flick from side to side through corners. The fact the Street Triple weighs in at a lithe 188kg wet also helps when it comes to throwing it around through corners.

The feel from the front-end is excellent and you can brake late into corners with plenty of confidence; no doubt partially attributable to the excellent Pirelli rubber which offers loads of grip in dry conditions. Once cranked over the RS holds its line nicely, but if you need to make any adjustments just a bit of a push on the wide handlebar is enough to quickly change line.

That handlebar is set at a comfortable height for everyday riding, allowing you to sit up and easily see what is going on around you when navigating through traffic. The seat is set quite high, too, at 836mm, and the overall riding position feels quite commanding, giving plenty of control in urban environments and when riding through tight twisties. For shorties, there is an optional low seat that reduces seat height by 28mm to 808mm, while super-shorties can also opt to have an optional suspension linkage fitted to reduce rear-end height by a further 10mm, dropping the low seat to 798mm. I feel that these lowering options could affect the overall lean-forward bias though, and being a bit of a shorty myself I didn't find the standard seat height problematic. My advice would be to leave it alone.

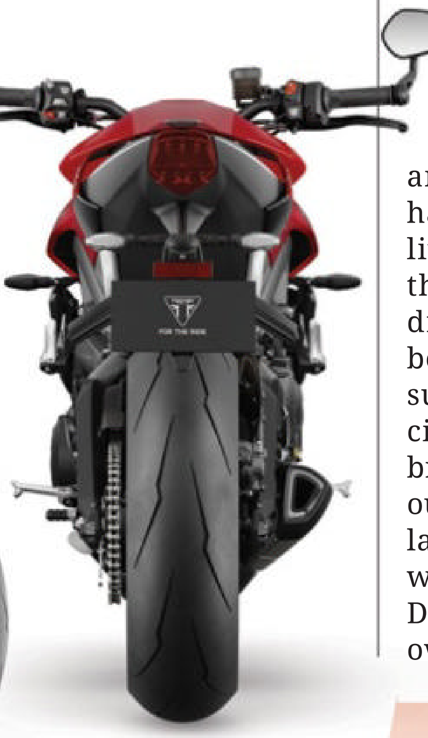
I didn't play around with the fully adjustable Showa fork; it offered good compliance and control on both the road and track, as did the Öhlins shock out the back. Although reasonably firm, the suspension doesn't feel at all harsh, even over chopped-up bitumen, of which there was a fair bit on our road ride.

Triumph chose the tight East Circuit at The Bend in South Australia to showcase the performance of the Street Triple on the track, and a better bike/track combination you'd be hard-pressed to find, with a staggering 22 corners littered around the track's 3.93km length. I used third and fourth for most of the circuit, only dropping to second for the last tight right-hander before the start/finish straight. The standard suspension settings felt fine for the pace I was circulating at, with minimal dive under heavy braking and controlled squat when accelerating out of corners. Some of the faster riders at the launch were keen to add a bit more preload, but when I say faster I mean *a lot* faster (think Cam Donald and Tom Bramich). Luckily we have our own fast bloke who has also ridden the Street

> **THE RIDING POSITION FEELS COMMANDING, GIVING PLENTY OF CONTROL**

1

2



1. Stunt legend Lukey Luke demonstrates some of that control Deano's talking about

2. Versatilty is an oft-used word, but the Street Triple is the master of it

3. The rear-end comes with a colour-coded cowl – the bike is delivered with a smallish pillion seat

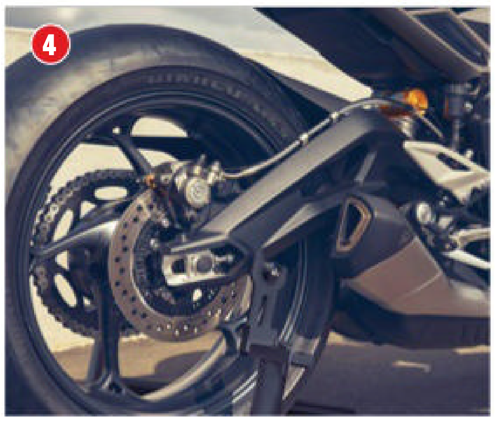
4. Did someone say trackday?

STREET TRIPLE 765 R

STREET TRIPLE 765 RS

STREET TRIPLE MOTO2 EDITION

③



④

THE STREET, THREE WAY$

Three versions separated by $7170

THERE ARE three models in the 2023 Street triple line up: the Street Triple 765 R, the Street Triple 765 RS (as tested) and the Street Triple Moto2 Edition.

The Street Triple R starts at $18,090 ride away and is slightly down on power compared with the other two models, making a claimed 88.3kW (118hp) at 11,500rpm and 80Nm at 9500rpm. It runs Showa suspension front and rear, Brembo M4.32 four-piston radial monobloc calipers, Continental ContiRoad tyres and a multi-function display with colour TFT.

As well as an extra 10kW, the Street Triple RS and Moto2 Edition come with an Öhlins shock, upgraded Brembo Stylema four-piston radial monobloc calipers, sticky Pirelli Diablo Supercorsa SP V3 tyres and a full-colour five-inch TFT display. Slightly different suspension geometry results in a more agile chassis for the RS, which also has slightly different bodywork and comes standard with a colour-coded seat cowl and a colour-coded belly pan. The RS starts at $20,590.

The Moto2 Edition is only available in limited numbers (most of which have already been accounted for) and it comes with a 43mm Öhlins fork, carbon-fibre bodywork, a machined top yoke with its number etched into it, lower-set clip-on 'bars (80mm lower and 50mm further forward), and is available in Triumph Racing Yellow or Crystal White with official Moto2 branding. It even features a Moto2 logo on the TFT screen at start up. There will be 765 of each colour scheme worldwide, and only 30 of each colour for Australia. The Moto2 Edition costs $25,290.

SPECS

ENGINE
Capacity 765cc
Type Inline triple, four valves per cylinder
Bore & stroke 78mm x 53.4mm
Compression ratio 13.25:1
Cooling Liquid
Fueling EFI
Transmission Six-speed
Clutch Wet, multi-plate, slip & assist
Final drive Chain

PERFORMANCE
Power 95.6kW (128hp) @ 12,000rpm (claimed)
Torque 80Nm @ 9500rpm (claimed)
Top speed 240km/h (limited)
Fuel consumption 5.4L/100km (combined cycle)

ELECTRONICS
Type Bosch/Continental
Rider aids Cornering ABS, cornering traction control, front-wheel lift control, shift assist up-and-down quickshifter
Rider modes Rain, Road, Sport, Track and Rider configurable

CHASSIS
Frame material Aluminium alloy
Frame type Twin spar
Rake 23.2º
Trail 96.9mm
Wheelbase 1399mm

SUSPENSION
Type Showa/Öhlins
Front: 41mm USD fork, fully adjustable, 115mm travel
Rear: STX40 monoshock, fully adjustable, 131.2mm travel

WHEELS & BRAKES
Wheels Cast aluminium
Front: 17 x 3.5 Rear: 17 x 5.5
Tyres Pirelli Diablo Supercorsa SP V3
Front: 120/70ZR17 (58W)
Rear: 180/55ZR17 (73W)
Brakes Brembo Stylema
Front: Twin 310mm discs, four-piston calipers
Rear: Single 220mm disc, single-piston caliper

DIMENSIONS
Weight 188kg (wet, claimed)
Seat height 836mm
Width 792mm
Height 1064mm
Length 2052mm
Ground clearance Not given
Fuel capacity 15L

SERVICING & WARRANTY
Servicing First: 1000km
Minor: 10,000km
Major: 20,000km
Warranty Two years, unlimited kilometres

BUSINESS END
Price $20,590 (ride away)
Colours: Silver Ice, Carnival Red (+$300) and Cosmic Yellow (+$300)

CONTACT
www.triumphmotorcycles.com.au

Triple RS on the track (see Adam Child's 'Second Opinion') sidebar.

Like most nakeds, there's not much in the way of wind protection, but unless you're riding at very high speeds you're unlikely to find issue with this. If you do get the opportunity to stretch the Street Triple's legs, hanging on to that wide 'bar with your chin almost resting on the tank can be a bit of a chore. Fortunately, there is a flyscreen in the accessories catalogue and, if you intend to ride on track, I'd highly recommend ticking the options box for it. Personally, I'd also tick the options boxes for cruise control and heated grips and, for those who want even more kit on their RS, there are 50-plus accessories available (see sidebar 'All the Gear').

The new full-colour five-inch TFT screen is tailorable but a bit fussy. You can choose from several different displays and, on some of them, the selected ride mode is easy to see while on others it is not. All offer a clear speedometer, however, but some display options have a much clearer tacho readout than others; no doubt owners will eventually settle on a favourite and stick to it. Regardless, the screen is colourful, bright and thoroughly modern, while controls are easy to navigate and use after a bit of familiarisation.

ALL THE GEAR

There's a comprehensive range of accessories. Here are the main ones:

Inspiration pack (frame protectors, swingarm protection kit, engine cover protectors, tail tidy, and CNC machined fork protectors and front and rear brake reservoirs)	$1108.55
Tank bag	$229.05
Flyscreen	$190.87
Flyscreen visor	$177.50
Heated grips	$375.13
Tank pad	$47.41
Cruise control	$190.87
Engine covers	$162.47
Swingarm protection kit	$109.79
CNC machined fork protectors	$82.36
Tyre pressure monitoring system	$430.03
My Triumph connectivity	$57.27
Low seat	$229.05
Tail tidy	$225.08
Passenger grab rail	$333.06

Other accessories include a garage mat, bike cover, scrolling LED indicators, machined oil-filler cap and more. For full details head to the Bike Configurator on the Triumph Motorcycles website.

At $20,590 ride away, I reckon the Triumph Street Triple 765 RS is a bargain. It's loaded with high-tech electronics and high-end hardware, so you would expect it to be something quite special, but it somehow manages to be even more than just the sum of its parts. As well as doing all the stuff you'd expect of a quality midsize nakedbike, it goes about it in such a way that it's exciting to ride every time you climb aboard, whether you're just weaving through traffic, blatting around the backroads or fanging it on the track. It looks like we're going to have to line up a midsize nakedbike shootout as soon as we can. And I can't wait.

PROS AND CONS

PROS	CONS
Character-laden engine with plenty of poke, flickable chassis, latest electronics, phenomenal braking package and super-sticky Pirellis.	The five-inch TFT display is a bit fussy, the flyscreen is an optional extra and the limited-numbers Moto2 Edition is all but sold out.

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DADDY LONG LEGS

Over two decades and four generations in, Suzuki has lashed some proper off-road focused kit to its venerable V-Strom 1050

It's been 21 years since the first V-Strom rolled onto Aussie shores and in that time, it has earned a reputation as a comfortable and dependable adventure tourer. But up until now the V-Strom has carried itself with a definite road-riding bias, and a lack of ground clearance, suspension travel and a bulging waistline have resigned it to soft-roading duties.

Enter the 2023 V-Strom 1050DE, a V-Strom that now sports a bunch of changes aimed at giving Suzuki's mighty V-twin all-roader greater off-road chops.

Although it's considered the fourth generation V-Strom, it's more of an evolution of the V-Strom 1050XT of 2020-2022 than it is an all-new model. The Euro 5-compliant 1037cc, 90° V-twin engine remains unchanged except for a set of sodium-filled exhaust valves which are used to reduce temperatures in the combustion chamber, which means the DE is pushing out the same 79kW (106hp) of power at 8500rpm and 100Nm of torque at 6000rpm.

Not that I'm complaining, because its ancestor, the 1997 TL1000S twin, is one of the best engines ever made. And after so many years it's totally sorted and delivers the goods in a refined, yet character-filled manner. Suzuki has made internal and external gearing changes so although there's no extra power on tap the DE now bangs harder than it ever has, especially thanks to the change from a 41-tooth rear sprocket to a 45 tooth.

There's now a two-way quickshifter rather than the up-only unit found on the XT and, while not all quickshifters are created equal, the Suzuki's is better than many others: slow, fast, on the gas or off it, it works beautifully. The DE also comes with a new 'bar that is 40mm wider to give better leverage, a sturdy bashplate, crash bars, longer-travel suspension, a longer swingarm for better stability, a suite of handy electronics and a 21-inch front wheel – a first for the V-Strom!

These are all good changes if you want to up the off-road spec of your machine, but there's a literal elephant in the room in that

WORDS **PETE VORST** + PHOTOGRAPHY **INCITE IMAGES**

it's put on some weight in the off-season. With all the additions, the DE weighs 5kg more that the XT it replaces at a not-insignificant 252kg (wet).

That's not out of control considering the weight for other big-bore adventure machines, but it's how a bike carries its weight that's just as important in this category. To that end, the DE feels top heavy. And it's particularly noticeable when riding slowly off-road, when pushing the thing around, and when tipping the beast into a corner on the tarmac.

In addition, the DE's 880mm seat height might have short-legged riders sweating and hoping for the best when coming to rest – thank your chosen deity the DE has decent crash bars. Partial help is at hand though, with an optional low seat available that brings the seat height down by 30mm to a more manageable 850mm.

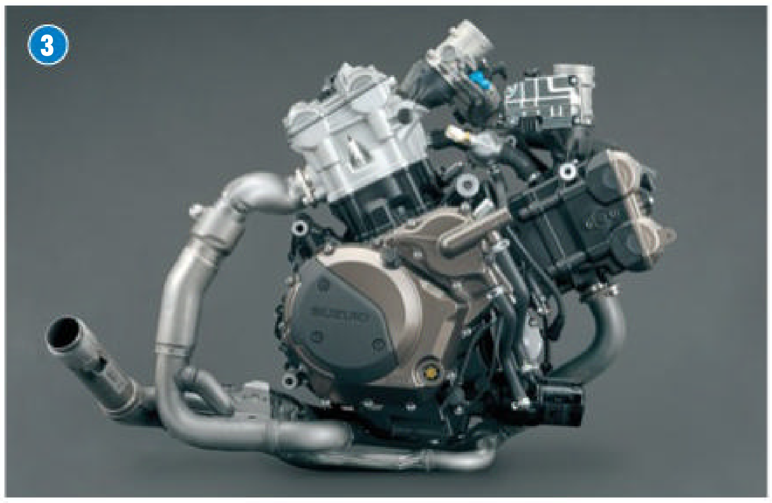
The DE's alloy frame remains unchanged but there's now a longer and more rigid swingarm hanging off it for improved off-road stability. Bolted to the front is an adjustable 43mm KYB USD fork, while on the back you'll find an adjustable KYB monoshock with external preload knob. The suspension is one of the most significant changes to the DE with suspension travel now coming in at 170mm up front and 169mm at the rear, a 10mm increase on the front and 9mm on the rear. Subsequently, ground clearance is an improved 190mm.

One of the other important changes is the addition of that 21-inch front wheel. The DE tracks over rougher ground better than the XT, which used a 19-inch front, and the steering on the road feels a bit livelier without being overly twitchy. Strangely, the rear is the same 17-inch tubeless setup as the XT, but the new front is a tubed affair. Suzuki reckons this is due to it being the 'optimal' setup, but I'm erring on the side of the 'let's save some bucks' setup.

The wire-spoked wheels are shod with Dunlop Trailmax Mixtour rubber (90/90-21 and 150/70-17), and I must say I was apprehensive about hitting the dirt on them. But they worked okay for what they are which is a dual-purpose tyre designed more for road than off-road and, just like the V-Strom itself, they'll take you most places if you ride accordingly. On the road they are fantastic, and once you become accustomed to the 1050's top-heavy feel, you can punt the 'Strom pretty hard.

As mentioned, the DE is equipped with a large aluminium bashplate. Gladly, it's not a token bashplate made out of aluminium foil so you shouldn't need to upgrade. And if you're taking the V-Strom off-road you do need that protection because the oil filter is still positioned vulnerably at the lower front of the engine.

The other big news for the DE is its six-axis Bosch IMU that governs the ride modes (A, B, C), switchable cornering ABS and traction control, and a host of other fancy electronics. Although the DE's power delivery is about as linear and smooth



1. With loads of mechanical grip, it's a hoot on the tarmac

2. The seat height on the standard model is more accessible at 855mm and it wears a 19in front

3. One of Suzuki's long-term gems: its grunty one-litre V-twin

4. Pillions are well looked after with massive grab handles

5. The DE has a beefed-up chain to handle the extra off-road stresses

ONE OF THE OTHER IMPORTANT CHANGES IS THE 21-INCH FRONT WHEEL. THE DE TRACKS OVER ROUGHER GROUND BETTER THAN THE XT

V-STROM 1050: THE STANDARD VERSION

AS WELL as the DE, Suzuki also released a new standard version of the V-Strom 1050 for 2023.

Essentially the same bike apart from a few key differences, the 1050 is $1700 less expensive and lacks some of the DE's off-road focussed changes such as the 21-inch front wheel, long-travel suspension, switchable ABS and Gravel traction control mode.

The 1050 benefits from the addition of the DE's excellent new five-inch TFT dash and quickshifter, but also offers features not found on the DE like an adjustable screen, adjustable seat and a lower stretch to the ground which is 855mm rather than the 880mm of the DE.

The 1050 rolls on 110/80-19 and 150/70-17 rubber encapsulating cast-alloy tubeless wheels, runs a composite engine guard rather than an alloy job, and if you want crash bars you'll need to cough up the dough for them as an optional extra. Apart from that they are very similar bikes; which one you choose will come down to taste, budget and how and where you ride.

DO THE DASH

The 1050 is now equipped with a bright and easy to read full-colour five-inch TFT dash with a simple interface that should be the envy of other manufacturers.

TANKARD

The tank on both models holds a healthy 20 litres of fuel which blasts petrol into the combustion chamber via a Delphi EFI system and two 49mm throttle bodies.

LET'S BOUNCE

New KYB suspension front and rear increases suspension travel with an extra 10mm on the front and an extra 9mm on the rear-end.

FLAILING ARMS

The 1050DE runs a longer swingarm than the XT model of old which aids stability, with torsional rigidity increased by around 10 percent.

NO, WHEELIE

For the first time in the V-Strom's 21-year history Suzuki has loaded the 1050 with an off-road focused 21-inch front wheel.

THE TWIN IS SO TRACTABLE I HAD THE TRACTION CONTROL SWITCHED OFF FOR MUCH OF THE ROAD AND OFF-ROAD SECTIONS

as it gets, the ride modes allow you customise the delivery to suit your tastes. All ride modes give you access to all of the DE's power and torque – there's no reduced output mode. The difference is in the throttle response and the delivery of the power and torque.

Mode A has the sharpest throttle response, which I found a bit twitchy for my liking – fine on the road but a bit trigger-happy on the dirt. The delivery is a bit more 'all guns blazing' and there's a definite lift in urgency when the needle hits 6000rpm compared to the other modes.

Mode B delivers a less-abrupt throttle response which I preferred, and the power and torque curves feel more linear with no discernible kicks through the rev range. And C mode is more of the same – softer throttle response and an even more linear power delivery. If it were possible, I'd give mode C back for a discount as the DE's engine is so refined and the power delivery so predictable it really doesn't need it. Add to that the practically flawless fueling, and if you're still struggling with throttle metering maybe the V-Strom 650 would have been a better choice.

Unique to the DE is the G mode, which stands for gravel. It alters the traction control to allow some spin of the rear wheel, which is a non-negotiable when riding off-road with any gumption.

It's a nice feature, and perfect for riders not accustomed to hanging the rear out who can now rip along knowing the system will stop the rear wheel from coming too far around. Experienced off-roaders may find that the amount the system lets you drift to be insufficient, and there were times that I wanted a bit more leeway to steer with the rear. At more sedate speeds, though, I reckon the system is near perfect, as is the entire traction control system in general. It's not one of those systems that cuts power abruptly and, when it does kick in, the DE still drives forward helping you maintain momentum. In off-road, momentum is nearly always your friend.

The rear ABS can be turned off and, although the front ABS can't be deactivated, it did a great job in the rocky and dusty downhill section I rode on the launch. I usually prefer to turn the ABS off on

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BMW F 850 GS ADVENTURE

Engine 853cc parallel-twin
Power 66kW (90hp)
Torque 86Nm
Weight 244kg (wet)
From $21,680 (ride away)

CFMOTO 800MT EXPLORE

Engine 799cc parallel-twin
Power 67kW (91hp)
Torque 75Nm
Weight 231kg (wet)
$16,490 (ride away)

DUCATI DESERTX

Engine 937cc V-twin
Power 81kW (110hp)
Torque 92Nm
Weight 223kg (wet)
$25,800 (ride away)

HONDA AFRICA TWIN

Engine 1084cc parallel-twin
Power 75kW (102hp)
Torque 105Nm
Weight 238kg wet
$22,999 (plus on-roads)

TRIUMPH 900 RALLY PRO

Engine 888cc triple
Power 70kW (93.9hp)
Torque 87Nm
Weight 201kg (dry)
From $25,450 (ride away)

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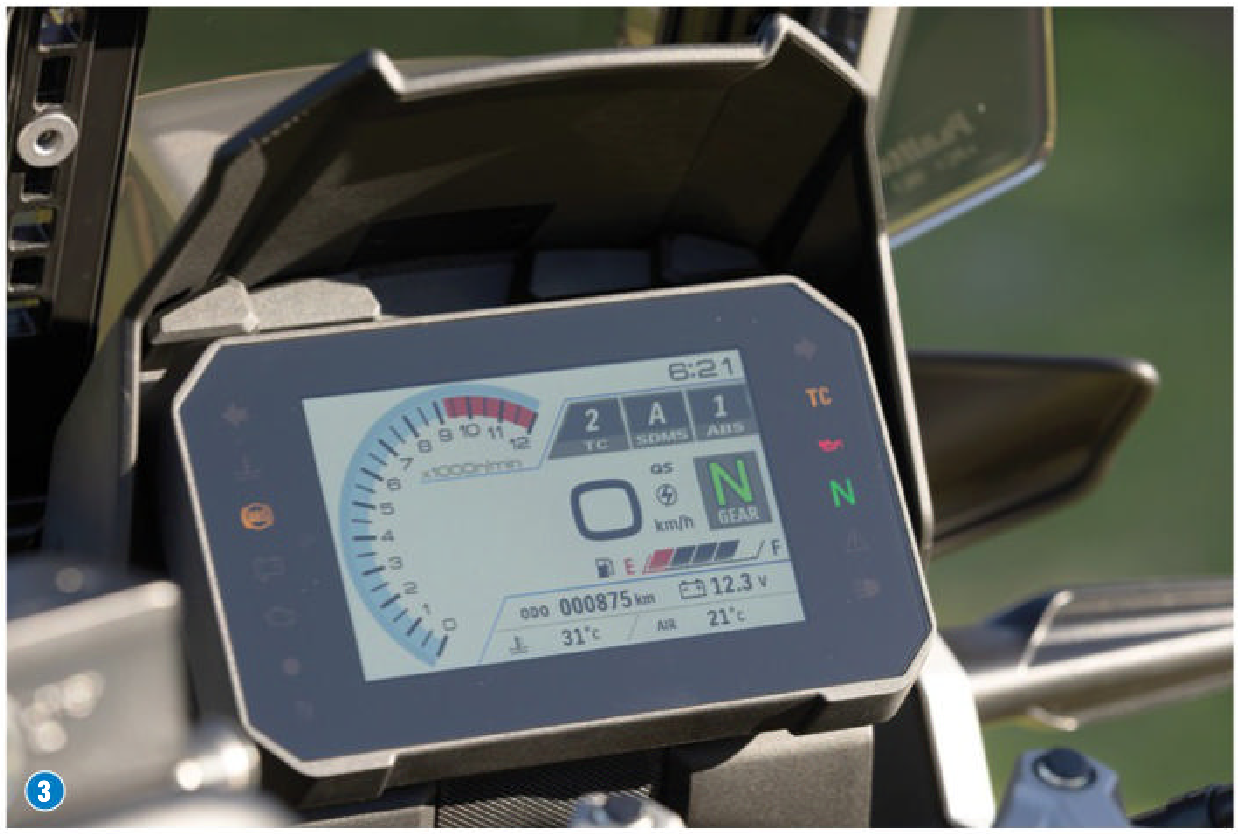

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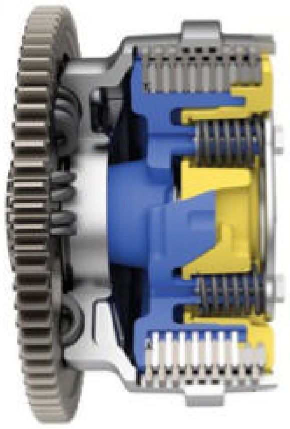
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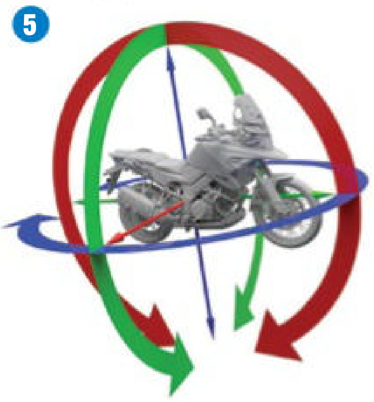
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both ends, but I was content with the front ABS in its use and application.

The front brakes can muster up some serious retardation, with stopping power provided by a set of Tokico radial monobloc four-piston calipers gripping a set of 310mm discs. The rear is also pretty good, with the tail-end sporting a 260mm disc matched to a single-piston Nissin caliper. My only gripe was with excess free play in the rear brake pedal. You're a fair way into the stroke before anything happens and then it's hard to gauge where you are in the narrow window between slowing down in an orderly fashion and locking the rear Dunlop.

There are three levels of traction control intervention and, if you're feeling brave enough to let the big V-twin do what it wants, you can turn it off completely. But again, the twin is so tractable and smooth I had the traction control switched off for much of the road and off-road sections.

The rider-aid list doesn't end there. The DE also gets Suzuki's Hill Hold Control System that stops you rolling back when stopped on a slope, and a function that monitors and controls rear wheel lift and controls brake pressure while descending steep declines.

While not groundbreaking, these electronic additions are welcome as Suzuki catches up to the rest of the adventure bike pack. But where the DE leaves the others in its dust is the way you control all its functions. The 1050 is decked out with a full-colour five-inch TFT dash and it is so simple and elegant I reckon other manufacturers should be taking notes from Suzuki. There are only three buttons that need to be used to change or find the information or setting you're after. You don't need to flick through half a dozen different menus on several different pages, it's all there in a simple and easy to navigate design. With the complexity of some of today's systems, the DE's dash is a breath of sweet-smelling air – bravo Suzuki!

If I must whinge about something, it's the DE's non-adjustable screen. The standard 1050 has a tool-less system that has a flip-up latch at the front which lets you adjust the height. And making matters worse, as the DE's screen is based on the

1. We reckon it looks tough

2. Cornered: PV enjoyed himself through the twisties

3. The dash is both elegant and supremely easy to use

4. The DE's slipper clutch

5. If you get dizzy easily, please leave... Suzuki's six-axis IMU

6. With such a tractable engine, why not?

SUZUKI V-STROM 1050DE

SPECS

ENGINE
Capacity 1037cc
Type 90° V-twin, four valves per cylinder
Bore & stroke 100.0mm x 66.0mm
Compression ratio 11.5:1
Cooling Liquid
Fueling EFI
Transmission Six-speed
Clutch Wet, multi-plate, slipper
Final drive Chain

PERFORMANCE
Power 79kW @ 8500rpm (claimed)
Torque 100Nm @ 6000rpm (claimed)
Top speed 220km/h (est)
Fuel consumption 5.2L/100km (claimed)

ELECTRONICS
Type Bosch
Rider aids Cornering ABS, traction control, hill hold control, slope dependant control, quickshifter, cruise control
Rider modes Active, Basic, Comfort

CHASSIS
Frame material Aluminium alloy
Frame type Twin-spar
Rake 27.3°
Trail 126mm
Wheelbase 1595mm

SUSPENSION
Type KYB
Front: 43mm USD, fully adjustable, 170mm travel
Rear: Monoshock, adjustable rebound and preload, 169mm travel

WHEELS & BRAKES
Wheels Wire-spoked aluminium
Front: 21 x 2.5 Rear: 17 x 4.0
Tyres Dunlop Trailmax Mixtour
Front: 90/90-21
Rear: 150/70-17
Brakes Tokico/Nissin, ABS
Front: Twin 310mm discs, four-piston calipers
Rear: Single 260mm disc, single-piston caliper

DIMENSIONS
Weight 252kg (wet, claimed)
Seat height 880mm
Width 960mm
Height 1505mm
Length 2390mm
Ground clearance 190mm
Fuel capacity 20L

SERVICING & WARRANTY
Servicing First: 1000km
Minor: 12,000km
Major: 48,000km
Warranty Three years, unlimited kilometres

BUSINESS END
Price $24,690 ride away
Colour options Champion Yellow No.2, Glass Sparkle Black or Pearl Vigor Blue

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base-model's system, there's a bunch of redundant plastic fittings that look kind of average on a near-$25k motorcycle.

Besides that, the screen is just a little too short for my 186cm frame, but anyone under six-foot will be happy I reckon.

There are other handy additions like a USB port on the left-hand side of the instrument cluster and a 12v port under the seat, cruise control as standard and heated grips are available as an option. The cockpit is roomy, the seat wide and plush and it's comfortable when you're up on the wide 'pegs which have removable rubber inserts.

However I found the setup of the wide handlebar all wrong for me. For my size, I felt the 'bar needed to be closer when in the seated position and further away when standing.

That's not something that can really be fixed – I guess it's a compromise that needs to be made when you stand up on a bike that was really designed as a roadbike. Having said that, it's not so uncomfortable that it causes issues, I just never quite felt all-day comfortable with either riding position. But other riders will disagree.

All the changes to the DE will be welcomed by anyone looking to do a little more off-roading on a V-Strom. The DE's new off-road abilities haven't come at the cost of the Strom's renowned on-road performance or comfort, and honestly for the extra $1700, I don't know why you'd go with the standard model unless you're particularly short.

Despite the upgrades, the DE has a lot of competition coming at it from different sides. If you're less dirt-orientated, there's the standard 'Strom, Ducati Multistrada V2, Triumph Tiger 900 Sport and CFMoto's $16k 800MT Explore. If you're after more off-road thrills, there's a bunch of bikes from KTM, Husqvarna, Triumph and Ducati.

There's no doubt the updates have made the DE a better adventure tourer. There might be better off-roaders, and there might be better on-roaders, but few offer the all-round versatility, comfort and reliability that the V-Strom has always been famous for.

OFF-ROAD ABILITIES HAVEN'T COME AT THE COST OF THE STROM'S ON-ROAD PERFORMANCE

The big, grunty V-twin is as lovely as the day it was released. The DE feels solid enough to survive a nuclear blast and it's comfortable and great value for money.

PROS AND CONS

The DE is top heavy and the seat height might be a bit out of reach of shorter folk. One tubed and one tubeless rim will make journeys more complicated than they need to be.

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- Highly loaded silica compound combined with state of the art polymer technology for excellent wet and dry traction and handling
- Interlocking three dimensional points hidden in the sipes to improve stability and grip, limit tread flex and allow the tyre to warm up quickly (3D Sipes)
- Avon's latest technology construction design gives ultra high performance handling and stability characteristics
- Multi-compound rear tyres for all round tyre performance

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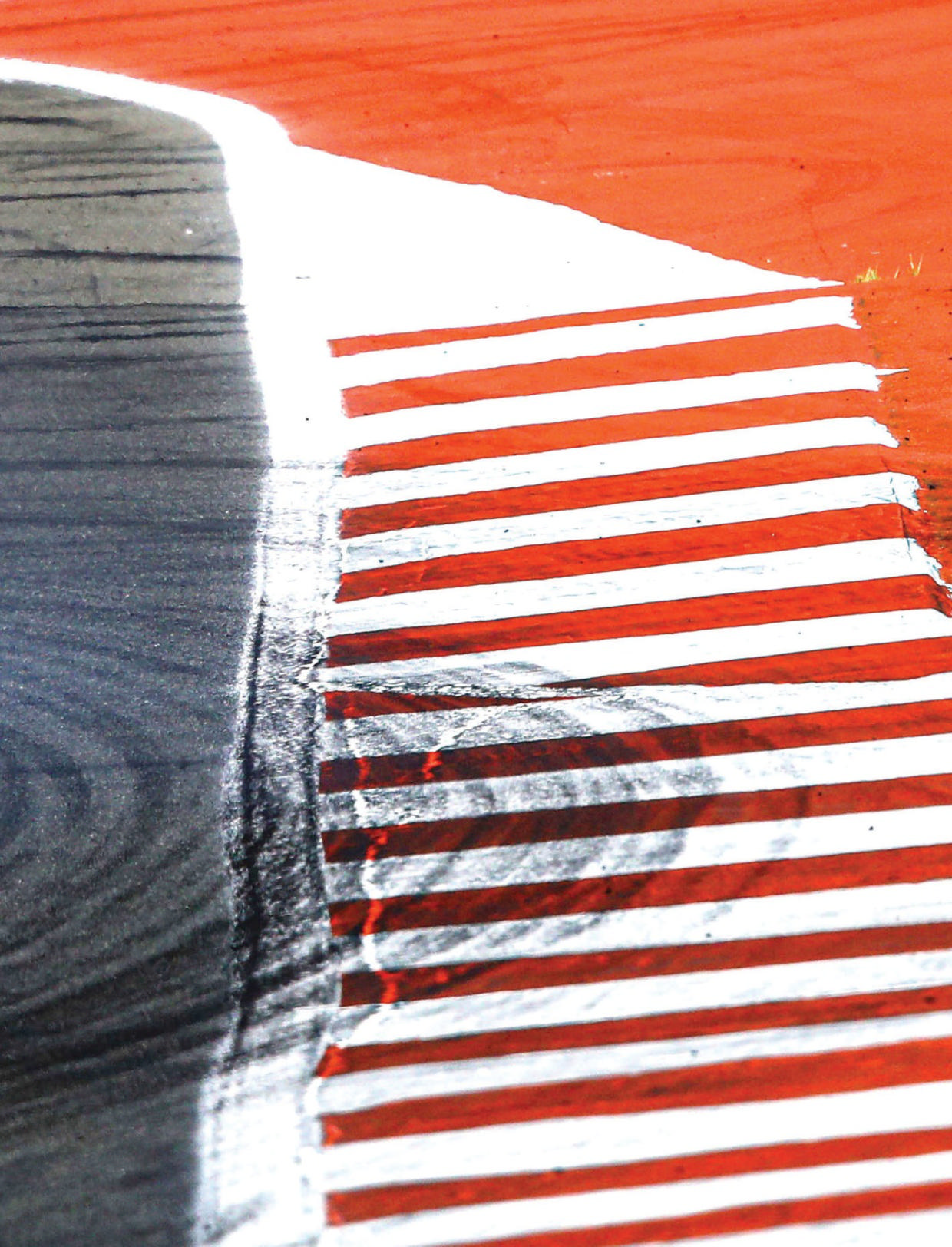
WHOLE SHOT

The last time Jack 'Thriller' Miller campaigned a KTM-branded grand prix machine, he missed out on the Moto3 world title by just two points. Imagine if he could go one better in 2023...

Gold&Goose



WORDS **NEIL MORRISON** + PHOTOGRAPHY **GOLD&GOOSE**

2023 A NEW ERA

Nine months, 42 races, 777 points up for grabs and only one winner. Strap yourselves in for MotoGP 2023!

It's common for season previews to assert MotoGP is back and bigger than ever. But that's really the case in 2023. In terms of competition, the series has never been bigger. Not only are 21 full races penned in, the longest calendar in history, with faraway, first-time stop-offs in Kazakhstan and India; the introduction of MotoGP Sprint swells the schedule to levels of intensity never seen before.

A short Saturday race (run at half distance of the Sunday's Blue Ribbon event) at each round means riders face a whopping 42 races over a hectic nine months where a grand total of 777 points are on offer (that's 277 more than 2022). The 21 rounds that lie ahead in 18 different countries will be a challenge like no other. Little wonder riders, technicians and team members alike are preparing with more than a little trepidation of what's ahead.

And not just because there will be more racing than ever. There is heightened competition, too, with Ducati continuing to raise the bar over the off season. Eventually the 2022 fare whittled the contenders down to two

1. Can Honda come to the performance party for Marquez?

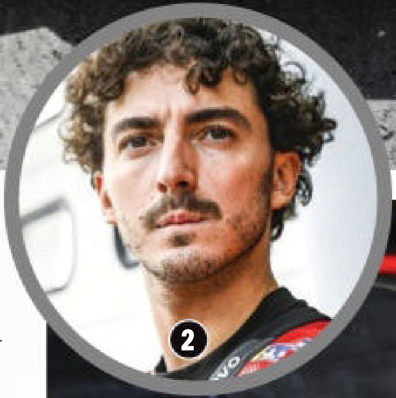
2. Bagnaia: the man with the target on his back in 2023

3. Marini has enjoyed a magnificent presseason

4. After a year on the Aprilia, Viñales is now ready to pounce

5. Italians Morbidelli (left), Marini (centre) and Bagnaia compare preseason notes

6. Zarco's still capable of anything when the planets align



by November. Preseason testing has indicated the Ducati hegemony witnessed in the second half of last year very much remains. But there are early signs reigning champion Francesco Bagnaia (Ducati Lenovo) will face sterner tests from within his own factory, with grinning assassin Enea Bastianini fronting up as his well-resourced teammate.

Some of the major technical flaws that plagued 2021 champ Fabio Quartararo (Monster Energy Yamaha) last year appear to have been rectified. And that's before we get to Marc Marquez (Repsol Honda) who, in his own words, is "fully recovered" from the injury woes that plagued each of his previous three seasons.

The Bagnaia-Bastianini dynamic plus Marquez's full return should add a touch of needle to competitive proceedings that were, at times, overly cordial last year. There's no reason to think any four of those names won't be able to push for the 75th edition of the crown until the season concludes in late November. And that's before we mention the hugely determined Aleix Espargaro, whose motorcycle and support have improved again.

As ever the 22-rider grid is as stacked as ever with 13 World Champions, who have amassed 24 titles among them, lining up. As many as 16 of them are potential podium finishers, while Repsol Honda new boy Joan Mir estimated 12 of them are potential race winners.

With practice shortened over a race weekend, it's more important than ever to arrive to the first round with a sorted packaged. And testing indicated Ducati still leads the charge in terms of both performance, strength and depth. Any one of eight Desmosedicis can fight for podiums and front rows. Aprilia has worked diligently, making enough small gains with its evolved RS-GP to suggest 2022 was no flash in the pan. It adds two satellite machines to further bolster its ranks as well.

Yamaha's enterprise couldn't be faulted over the winter. It has rectified the issues which plagued Quartararo last term – mainly a lack of horsepower in its engine – but it's far from the polished package heading into race one. And what to say of KTM and Honda? Both were lagging at the Sepang test, with the Austrians struggling for development direction despite bringing myriad new parts. Honda, meanwhile, appears completely lost. Only Marquez's genius can save it from here.

FRONT TYRE PRESSURE

To punish or not to punish?

THE NEW season sees the introduction of a unified tyre pressure monitoring system for all bikes which should see riders punished for any infringements. Minimum pressure limits (1.9 bar [27.5psi] for the front tyre, 1.7 bar [24.6psi] for the rear) existed last year; but each manufacturer had its own means of measuring it, meaning there was no guarantee the data was aligned or hadn't been tampered with. It's believed many of last year's race winners were victorious with front tyre pressures under the specified limit.

That's set to change. Should a rider's tyre pressure drop below the required amount for a certain period of time in practice or qualifying, they'll have the lap time cancelled. If it's below a certain level over a certain period in a race, a rider could find themselves disqualified. These periods have yet to be defined, however. And penalties won't be applied in the first three races, giving teams the chance to find their levels.

Running front tyre pressures under 1.9 bar can have potentially disastrous consequences.

"If you don't put enough air inside the tyre, the construction is flexing," explained Piero Taramasso, Michelin's Head of Two Wheel Motorsport. "When it flexes you might make some rupture, the carcass could open and it could explode."

But riders are against this strict policing. Pressure in the front varies significantly depending on track position. Find yourself in first position and it isn't an issue. But when stuck behind several bikes, it can rocket in a handful of laps.

THE CONTENDERS

#1 Pecco Bagnaia Ducati Lenovo

The Italian has grown in stature after 2022, a year when he ended Ducati's 15-year wait for the Riders' Championship, and completed the biggest points comeback in premier-class history. He's benefited from a settled preseason, as his manufacturer has prioritised evolving his machine over developing radical novelties. Must start as favourite to retain his crown.

#5 Johann Zarco Pramac Ducati

A muted preseason by his standards, Zarco was the only Ducati rider outside the top nine at Sepang. But there's no reason to think the experienced Frenchman won't score at least a handful of podiums, even if he split from training partner Jean-Michel Bayle during winter. What's of greater importance is the double Moto2 champ understands why he continues to underperform in the second half of seasons. He scored 56 points less in the second half of 2021 than the first, 71 less in '22. At the age of 32 can Zarco change these old habits?

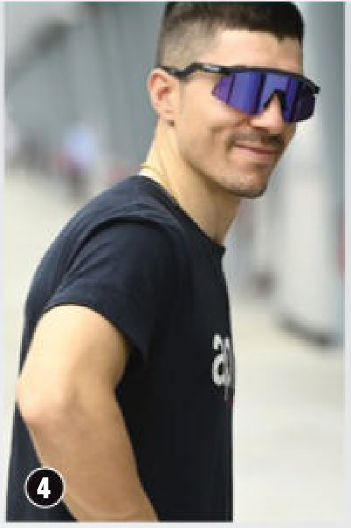
#10 Luca Marini VR46 Ducati

Arguably the most improved rider of last year, Marini will break his premier-class podium duck sooner rather than later if testing performances are anything to go by. Quickest at both Valencia and Sepang, the cerebral Italian has taken benefit from riding Bagnaia's title-winning machine all through preseason. No reason why he can't challenge to become the year's best satellite contender and multiple podium finisher, even on year-old equipment.

#12 Maverick Viñales Aprilia Racing

The Catalan's preseason speed has never been a gauge of season-long potential. But it's hard to envision Viñales not improving on a promising first full year with Aprilia. It took him time to master qualifying and, once he did, he racked up three podiums and nearly won at Silverstone. He feels more suited to the '23 RS-GP with its improved agility and has improved tyre conservation. Can win races this year.

3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NO REASON WHY HE CAN'T CHALLENGE AS THE YEAR'S BEST SATELLITE CONTENDER

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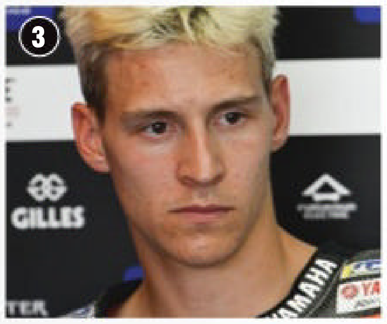


> **WAS A MASTER OF TYRE MANAGEMENT IN EACH OF HIS FOUR VICTORIES**

1. Grit personified: Quartararo is a fighter of the highest order

2. The improvements to the Aprilia could play into Espargaro's hands

3. Quartararo will again start as one of the title favourites

4. How will Mir settle into the second Repsol Honda seat?

5. A make or break year for former world No. 2, Morbidelli

6. Raul Fernandez now has a new team and bike to help lift him up the MotoGP ladder

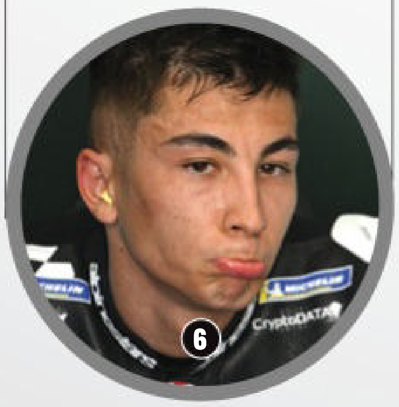
7. Can Binder put KTM at the sharp end on a regular basis?

8. Espargaro gets funky on the potent Aprilia RS-GP

9. Mir: new digs at Honda for the 2020 world champion

10. Nakagami's had a horrid few years; another bad one and his MotoGP days are numbered

11. Can Miller get the best out of a temperamental KTM?



#20 Fabio Quartararo Monster Energy Yamaha

Last season showcased a trait to go alongside the 23-year-old's blazing talent: grit. The Frenchman simply wouldn't lie down last year, despite losing massively on straights. Now aboard a faster engine, expect him to be vying to reclaim the crown he lost last year. His potential is without question. But Yamaha's lack of qualifying speed, and unreliable back up from teammate, Morbidelli, could be his undoing.

#21 Franco Morbidelli Monster Energy Yamaha

No rider is fighting for his future like the enigmatic Italian. There have been few signs of the rider that finished second in the world in 2020 of late, with last year an unmitigated disaster. Franco scored just two top 10s in 20 races, and 206 points less than his teammate. Yet having spent the winter working on his fitness and approach, a drastic step up is expected this year - and needed. It's hard to see him fighting at the front, early on at least.

#23 Enea Bastianini Lenovo Ducati

Big things are expected of 2022's breakout star. He showed himself to be a master of tyre management in each of his four victories last year aboard a year-old machine. And in vying with future teammate Bagnaia in high-stakes outings, his mettle is without question. Yet the weight of expectation that befalls riders in Ducati's factory team is a different beast. Should he manage that, there's no reason to think he won't be a title contender.

#25 Raul Fernandez RNF Aprilia

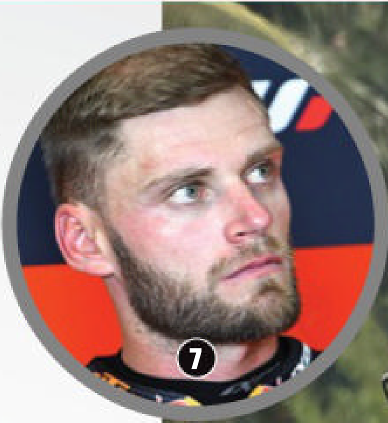
After a rookie season of near unparalleled brilliance in Moto2, Fernandez was last year's biggest MotoGP disappointment. Now he's where he wants to be, the 22-year-old appears happy once more. "Today was the first time I enjoyed riding the bike since 2021," he said after the first day of testing. He could be the year's surprise package if his attitude is kept in check by Team Boss Wilco Zeelenberg.

#30 Takaaki Nakagami LCR Honda

The 2020 season, Nakagami's best premier-class result to date, feels like a long time ago. Since then he's failed to show any of that form, as a variety of issues with an uncompetitive machine saw him score a single best result of fourth. Still suffering from effects of a hand injury that occurred last September. With Honda golden boy Ai Ogura waiting in the wings, Taka knows this could be his final season at this level.

#33 Brad Binder Red Bull KTM

The South African wasn't mincing his words at KTM's 2023 team presentation. "I want to change fighting for that top six to hopefully be fighting among that top three." And he's right. Binder spared KTM's blushes on more than one occasion in '22, claiming sixth in the championship. His riding skills are without question; now it's up to the Austrian factory to provide him with a bike that will aid his quest to regularly compete for podiums.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#36 Joan Mir Repsol Honda

Honda hired Mir on the basis of his "savage career results," according to Team Boss Alberto Puig. But Jorge Lorenzo and Pol Espargaro, previous names to occupy this seat, serve as a warning to the 2020 MotoGP champ. Understandably, expectations are muted. "My style is to do a season from less to more and increase the intensity a little race-by-race with better feelings."

#37 Augusto Fernandez GasGas Factory Racing Tech3

The sole rookie in 2023 courtesy of a string of outstanding performances in Moto2 last year, when he held his nerve in a tense showdown to take the title. His intelligence and grounded manner will work in his favour. But he faces a massive task to get up to speed aboard the KTM RC16; Remy Gardner proved it's far from an ideal rookie's bike.

⑧

#41 Aleix Espargaro Aprilia Racing

As his form tailed off dramatically in the autumn of last year, it was tempting to conclude Espargaro's 2022 would be a one off. But the veteran 33-year-old appears emboldened by his finest ever season (four places and 92 points better off than he ever managed before). He's diligently worked over preseason and should be another rider regularly in the podium hunt this year.

⑨

⑩

#42 Alex Rins LCR Honda

It's tempting to wonder where Alex Rins would have finished 2022 had Suzuki not decided to quit MotoGP at the end of the year. Before the announcement, the Spaniard was firmly in title contention. His late-season form (two wins from the final three races) showed the 27-year-old to be riding at the top of his game. Yet he faces an enormous challenge to adapt his riding style to turn the LCR Honda into a regular top-six finisher.

#43 Jack Miller Red Bull KTM

The 2023 season represents a new chapter for Miller after five largely successful seasons at Ducati where he evolved from a highly talented but inconsistent runner into a regular podium contender. KTM is a different challenge, and the Australian has acknowledged it may be some months before he finds himself back at the front.

⑪

AMCN PREDICTIONS

NEIL MORRISON
World champ
Pecco Bagnaia
Runner up
Marc Marquez
Dark horse
Brad Binder

DEAN MELLOR
World champ
Marc Marquez
Runner up
Enea Bastianini
Dark horse
Maverick Vinales

KEL BUCKLEY
World champ
Enea Bastianini
Runner up
Marc Marquez
Dark horse
Alex Marquez

PETE VORST
World champ
Marc Marquez
Runner up
Fabio Quartararo
Dark horse
Marco Bezzecchi

MARK FATTORE
World champ
Pecco Bagnaia
Runner up
Fabio Quartararo
Dark horse
Jorge Martin

HAMISH COOPER
World champ
Pecco Bagnaia
Runner up
Enea Bastianini
Dark horse
Marc Marquez

A WING AND IT'S FAIR

Upping the aerodynamics ante

AERODYNAMICS ARE playing a greater role in MotoGP than ever. At Sepang, Yamaha and KTM tested a diffusor-style fairing, which is aimed at accelerating airflow between the fairing and ground at full lean, following Ducati's lead (Aprilia and Honda also used this technology last year). All five manufacturers spent a good deal of preseason experimenting with different aero packages, which don't just limit wheelie but improve grip mid-corner.

MotoGP is looking more to F1 for guidance on this matter. Ducati and Aprilia have hired several engineers formerly of Ferrari. KTM is following suit, upping the ante in 2023 by striking up a partnership with Red Bull Advanced Technologies to have Formula 1 expertise on hand to refine its aero.

"We didn't grow our own experts enough for what's going on in MotoGP now," said Motorsports Director Pit Beirer. "It's super exciting and refreshing (to work with them). We go to the wind tunnel quite a lot. We warned about this scenario for many years - it'll open a new hole in the budget. But we have the budget so now it's part of our project."

#44 Pol Espargaro GasGas Factory Racing Tech3

The younger Espargaro brother summed his 2022 up thus: "Like going from paradise to hell." After third place in Qatar, he would score just one top-10 finish in a troubled second season for Repsol Honda. Now back at Tech3 - where he rode from 2014-16 - aboard a rebranded KTM which he competed on from 2017-2020, Pol has dutifully thrown himself into testing duties. Challenging for podiums, however, as he aims to do, will be a tough ask.

#49 Fabio Di Giannantonio: Gresini Ducati

Of all Ducati's challengers in 2022, 'Diggia' was the only one sporting a long face. A lack of experience, both from him and his side of the box, resulted in a veiled threat on social media to walk away from the sport last November. But benefiting from new crew-chief Frankie Carchedi's experience which carried Joan Mir to his 2020 championship - "I learned more in four days with him at Sepang than all last year" - Di Giannantonio looks capable of pushing for top sixes early on.

#72 Marco Bezzecchi VR46 Ducati

Big things are expected of 2022's Rookie of the Year. He ended last year strongly, scoring a maiden MotoGP pole in Thailand and narrowly missed podium finishes in Australia and Sepang. Crucially, the Italian understood his main weakness in 2022: a lack of aggression off the line. Bezzecchi's slightly tepid openings resulted in him losing a total of 60 positions (eight alone in the Malaysian GP) last year on the first lap of races. Fix that and a podium return should be guaranteed.

#73 Alex Marquez Gresini Ducati

As the younger Marquez brother has acknowledged, it's now or never. Having ditched a useless Honda for a seat which won four races last year, there's no hiding in Gresini, even if competing aboard a year-old bike. Testing performances were encouraging. Widely tipped to be one of the year's surprises. Expect podiums. Plural.

1. Bezzecchi has the speed, with a lack of early race pace his only real Achilles heel

2. Alex Marquez has now freed himself of the Honda shackles to join Ducati

3. Pol Espargaro is back in the KTM empire riding a GasGas

4. Alex Marquez on the Gresini Ducati at Sepang

5. The next world champion? If Martin irons out a few rough edges, don't bet against it

6. Belly flop: Marc Marquez in practice start mode

7. Pol Espargaro

8. Oliveira on the satellite Aprilia

9. Michelin motorsport boss, Piero Taramasso (left)

#88 Miguel Oliveira RNF Aprilia

The 2023 season is a step into the unknown for Oliveira. For seven of the previous eight years, he was a crucial figure in KTM's talent structure that spanned all three Grand Prix classes. Now aboard a year-old RS-GP, he appears in good shape to prove KTM was wrong to give him up. Expect him to outperform the factory team on more than one occasion.

#89 Jorge Martin Pramac Ducati

If awards were dished out for preseason, Martin would be the star. He immediately took to the Ducati's GP23 and declared himself "ready to race" after just two days of testing. Mistakes and a tendency to flag toward the race's end were as much his undoing in 2022 as an inability to find a base setting. But knowing his explosive one-lap speed, Martin stands to benefit from the new sprint format like few others.

#93 Marc Marquez Repsol Honda

Last month the eight-time champ acknowledged he's enduring "the biggest challenge of my sporting career" as he attempts to get back on top. And given Honda's current struggles to match Ducati's dominance, he's right. Yet one thing massively in his favour: a first injury-free preseason since 2017-18 and the sense he's returning to his physical peak after four surgeries on his right arm. Despite his bike's shortcomings, rule him out at your peril.

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“THE BIKE HAS TO BE AN ALL-ROUND PACKAGE WHEN IT ROLLS OUT ON TRACK”

6

MOTOGP SPRINT

So how does it work?

THE BIGGEST shake up in MotoGP history will see a MotoGP Sprint race on Saturday afternoon, before the feature race will be held over full distance the following day.

The schedule has been revised accordingly. MotoGP now has two practice sessions on Friday (P1 and P2) - the first 45 minutes long, the second an hour. The combined standings at the end of both sessions will determine those who automatically qualify for Saturday’s Q2 session, with the top 10 making the cut. A 30-minute free practice will precede qualifying (Q1 and Q2). Those sessions will determine the grid for both Saturday and Sunday’s outings.

The Sprint will take place at 3pm each Saturday. And the winner will score 12 points, with points going all the way down to ninth place (nine for second, seven for third, then six, five and so on).

Manufacturers will likely run a smaller fuel tank for Saturday’s affair, with capacity limited to 12 litres (it’s 22 for Sunday’s race).

“The configuration of the bike will be quite different. We have some different items ready,” said Antonio Jimenez, Aleix Espargaro’s crew chief.

This will place stresses on riders like never before. “We’re a little concerned about some circuits that are very demanding on the rider,” said Paolo Ciabatti, Ducati Sporting Director. “Like Austin, Mugello. Our riders are not used to this kind of stress in general. Will the riders have time to recover physically and mentally from the stress? This is another area which will probably make the championship more interesting.”

And technicians will have their hands full. Paul Trevathan, crew chief for Pol Espargaro, listed a few of the difficulties he foresees.

“Bike development - forget it at the racetrack. You have two one-hour sessions and guys are stressed to get into Q2 in FP1. [Set-up] will all be based on a feeling. You won’t have enough data to quantify it. That’ll make it really tough. The bike has to be an all-round package that when it rolls out on track, it’s working.

“I understand we need to do something. It’s just Saturday is going to put so much pressure on the riders. You just run out of time. We know it’s going to be a fairly intense thing. And if the bike’s not working, Jesus Christ! Then the stress factor is going to be super high. Longer meetings. Twice as much race data to look at. My god!”

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WORDS **MAT OXLEY** PHOTOGRAPHY **GOLD&GOOSE**

The RACE TO CATCH DUCATI

Ducati's four MotoGP rivals – Aprilia, Honda, KTM and Yamaha – have a straightforward but difficult target this year: to **catch the Desmosedici**

Ducati has led the way technologically for the last few seasons, with the fastest engine, aided by game-changing downforce aerodynamics. This year is significant because it's the first time that every factory on the grid is using ground-effect aero, 50 years after the technology arrived in Formula 1 cars.

There are two types of ground-effect fairings in MotoGP: those with diffuser ducts and those with flat-sided lowers designed to run parallel to the track. The idea of both is to accelerate the airflow between the fairing and the ground at full lean. This creates a low-pressure area, so the atmospheric pressure pushes the motorcycle into the asphalt, increasing grip and therefore improving turning.

Other big changes in MotoGP this year are Saturday's half-distance sprint races and the introduction of minimum-pressure tyre regulations. This rule, which could have a major effect on the racing, is due to come into force at the fourth race, at Jerez, Spain, so long as teams agree to it.

"OUR 2023 BIKE IS BETTER EVERYWHERE"

LAST YEAR Aprilia won its first MotoGP race and the RS-GP was probably the second-best motorcycle on the grid after the Ducati, so can the little Noale factory catch the Bologna giants in 2023?

"Our 2023 bike is better everywhere," said lead rider Aleix Espargaro. "The aerodynamics are better, the chassis is a bit lighter and turns a bit better, thanks to the new aero, and the engine is slightly faster. But I'm not sure it will be enough. After Ducati we aren't bad, but all their riders are very fast."

There's little doubt Aprilia and Ducati currently build the best bikes, largely because they have embraced downforce aerodynamics, hiring Formula 1 aerodynamicists to unlock the secrets of this hugely important new area of performance.

"The engineers have done a super-good job," continued Espargaro. "The bike is also a bit narrower, which allows me to be more aggressive in changes of direction. And the rider cooling is much better – last year I got burned in Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand."

Aprilia introduced its ground-effect fairing midway through last season and the design has been tweaked for 2023. The factory has also tested small ground-effect fitments to the front wheel and so-called S-ducts (another F1 trick) that funnel air from the main intake and out of exits either side of the screen to smooth airflow, thereby reducing turbulence and drag.

The RS-GP's main deficiency is straight-line braking. Michelin's rear slick is so much better than its front, so factories try to reduce forward pitch as much as possible to allow riders to use lots of rear brake.

Of course, the biggest change for Aprilia is the addition of an independent team – RNF – so there will be four RS-GPs on the grid. KTM refugees Miguel Oliveira and Raul Fernandez are both delighted with the bike, which is more user-friendly than the RC16.

1. Espargaro says the 2023 RS-GP turns much better

2. ... and with an improved engine and better aero, he's positively cockahoop

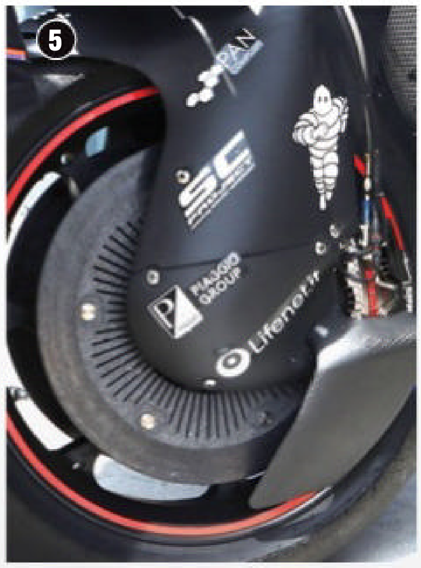
3. Vinales has also been very fast during preseason

4. Aprilia and Ducati are at the frontier of aerodynamics

5. The RS-GP's front wheel with the ground-effect fitments

THE TEAMS

Bike
RS-GP
Factory team
Aprilia Racing
Factory riders
Aleix Espargaro
Maverick Vinales
Satellite team
RNF MotoGP
Satellite riders
Miguel Oliveira
Raul Fernandez



“ITS POTENTIAL IS VERY HIGH”

DUCATI HAD a huge technical advantage last year and it’s hard to see any factory bettering the Desmosedici this season.

The GP22 had multiple race-winning features: stunning braking, acceleration and top-speed, plus a rider-friendly character, so eight different riders could take it to the limit. The GP23 seems to be better in all departments, which is why reigning world champion Pecco Bagnaia was a happy man during pre-season testing.

“I feel great with the new bike and its potential is very high,” he said. “We have more top speed with the new engine; something we don’t need but it’s always helpful. At first we struggled with power delivery – it was difficult to use full throttle because the bike was moving and sliding a lot, but then we made a huge step with the electronics.

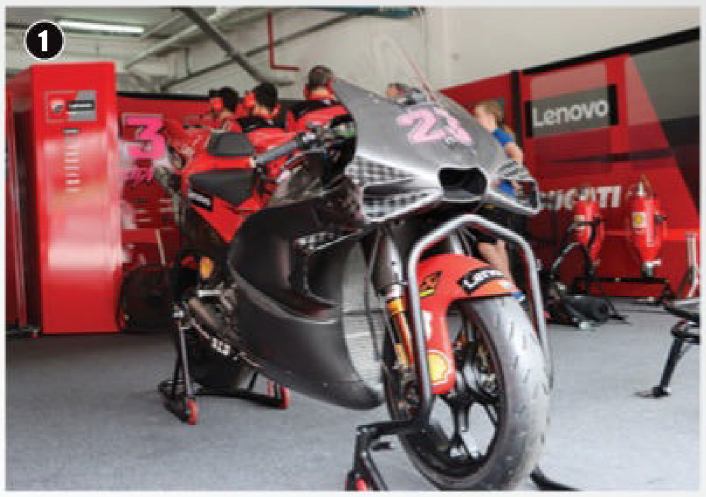
“We also made a really good step in the wet. Last year the bike was a nightmare in the rain, but this one is at a really good level.”

These words will strike terror into Ducati’s rivals, especially since they were backed up by new factory teammate Enea Bastianini.

“I feel really confident with the new bike and can ride it more softly and easily, so we can be fast,” said Bastianini. “I speak a lot with Pecco – we are so similar in riding styles that our comments are the same, so it’s much easier for the engineers to make the bike better.”

Ducati has tested two different ground-effect fairings – the diffuser fairing used since 2021 and a fatter lower one, like that used by Aprilia. The latter is better in braking situations, the former in cornering.

And if all this wasn’t enough bad news for rivals, Luca Marini was mega-fast in testing aboard his GP22. “This bike doesn’t have negative point in my opinion,” he said. “I feel comfortable in every area.”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1. The ‘fatter’ lower fairing being tested by Ducati

2. A mighty package already, and incremental improvements have now been made for 2023

3. Bastianini’s graduation to the factory team has been smooth

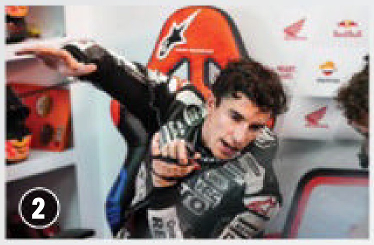
4. Bagnaia’s cockpit

5. Martin is shaping as the biggest threat to Ducati’s factory riders

5

THE TEAMS

Bike
Desmosedici GP23
Factory team
Ducati Lenovo
Factory riders
Francesco Bagnaia
Enea Bastianini
Satellite team (GP23)
Prima Pramac Racing
Satellite riders
Johann Zarco
Jorge Martin
Satellite team (GP22)
Gresini Racing
Satellite riders
Fabio Di Giannantonio
Alex Marquez
Satellite team (GP22)
Mooney VR46 Racing Team
Satellite riders
Luca Marini
Marco Bezzecchi



1. Rins, who was the in-form rider at the end of 2022, now has a big challenge ahead of him

2. Marquez in gesticulation mode – the champ is fit but his Honda is proving to be stubborn

3. The Ducati-style seat wings

4. The second seat at Repsol has been a poisoned chalice in recent years – Mir is aiming to change that

5. Marquez hard on the brakes at Sepang testing

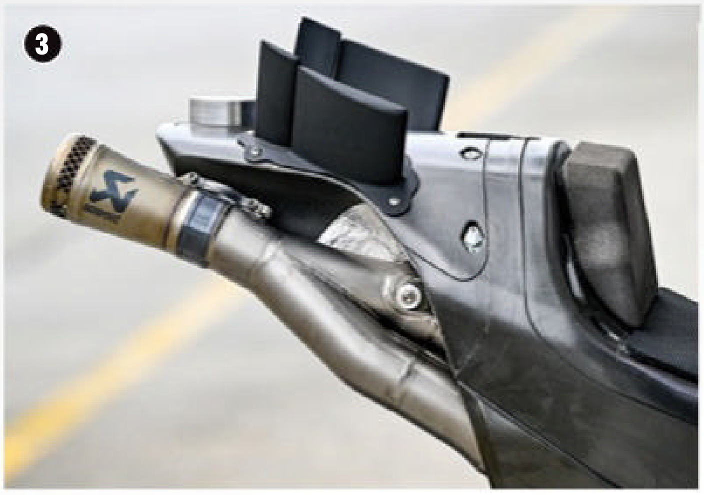
"OUR ENGINE IS POWERFUL, BUT WE DON'T HAVE TRACTION"

HONDA DIDN'T win a single race last year, the first time that's happened since 1981 (with the oval-piston NR500), so the company has a lot of catching up to do. Honda also has a new technical director – ex-Suzuki tech boss Ken Kawauchi – whose job is to steer it in a better direction.

The 2023 RC213V doesn't look much different to the 2022 bike, which might come as a surprise, but in fact one of the reasons Honda struggled last year was because HRC totally changed its machine and there's so little testing time nowadays. Although engineers believe the bike's base to be okay, it needs a lot of fine-tuning.

If you looked closely in pitlane during testing, it was easy to see that there are a lot of crucial changes to details for 2023: Honda is experimenting with several revised chassis, different engine positions, Aprilia-style ground-effect aero and so on.

"I feel more potential in the 2023 bike, but at the moment we are still far away," said Marc Marquez. "What I'm really looking for is better throttle connection exiting corners, because this is where the Ducati makes the difference. Our engine is powerful, but we don't have traction."



Honda's best news is Marquez's health, following three horrible years that followed a serious arm injury in 2020.

"On the physical side I feel really good and for me this is the most important," he added.

New teammate Joan Mir follows in the footsteps of Pol Espargaro and Jorge Lorenzo, who both had a horrible time at Repsol Honda. But Suzuki's 2020 MotoGP champion seemed happy enough in testing.

THE TEAMS

Bike
RC213V
Factory team
Repsol Honda
Factory riders
Marc Marquez
Joan Mir
Satellite team
LCR Honda
Satellite riders
Alex Rins
Takaaki Nakagami

“WE NEED TO TAKE TIME TO MAKE ALL THE CORRECT DECISIONS”

KTM, LIKE Honda, has a lot of catching up to do. The Austrian factory is certainly throwing huge resources at MotoGP, hiring more engineers from Ducati (who obviously bring Ducati’s secrets with them) and working with the Red Bull Formula 1 team to take the fight to Aprilia and Ducati in the aerodynamics war.

KTM has made so many changes for 2023 – new chassis, new engine, new aero – that the RC16 didn’t fly in pre-season testing, but so long as engineers keep moving forward perhaps the squads will be in better shape when the racing gets underway.

Therefore, testing has been complicated for KTM, especially for lead rider Brad Binder, who won KTM’s first MotoGP victory in his rookie season back in 2020.

“We’ve tried a lot of different things, so a lot of the time the bike is different every time I go out,” he said. “So that’s one of the biggest things – we need to take time to make all the correct decisions as far as the different engine and aerodynamics go, then put the package together and start working from there.

“We’ve got a new engine configuration, so we’ve been working on power, throttle response and engine braking. We’re looking for more power and traction on corner exits, because that’s where we get really hurt compared to our competitors.”

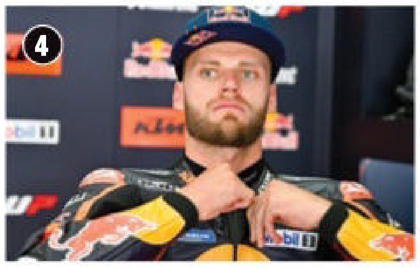
Funnily enough, the new engine has a deeper exhaust note, much like the Ducati.

“We’re playing a lot with the balance of the bike, trying to make it more stable on the brakes and throttle, less nippy, and that’s worked pretty good,” added Binder. “The bike is also lighter, so it should be easier at tracks where it’s hard to change direction. I’ve spent a lot of time with the new [diffuser] fairing but didn’t find a big difference.”

New teammate Jack Miller has a lot of learning to do, after five years with Ducati.

“We’re just trying to understand what we need from the bike,” said the Aussie. “I’ve been suffering quite a bit compared to the other KTM boys mid-corner, getting the bike to rotate [around the apex] and getting it off the corner. One of the bigger disadvantages we have at this point is putting the power to ground and getting the bike to come alive out of slower corners. From third gear on we can match pretty much every bike out there.

“I can really see some positives in there, I’m just trying to understand which way I need to ride the thing to exploit those strong points.”



1. Miller’s bike at Sepang

2. The Aussie’s biggest issue is getting good drive out of slower corners

3. Jack’s RC16 with the ground-effect fairing

4. Binder’s the man most likely in the KTM bunker – at least in the first half of the demanding season

5. A practice start for Binder

THE TEAMS

Bike
RC16
Factory team
Red Bull KTM
Factory riders
Jack Miller
Brad Binder
Satellite team
GasGas Factory Racing Tech3
Satellite riders
Pol Espargaro
Augusto Fernandez

"EVERYTHING IS LOOKING MUCH, MUCH BETTER THAN LAST YEAR"

YAMAHA FINDS itself in a complicated position this year. It has only two riders in MotoGP, instead of four, and the M1 is the only inline-four on a grid otherwise populated entirely by V4s. The V4s have more horsepower, while inline-fours are usually faster around corners – but they can't use their sweeping lines if there are a few V4s in the way.

This has forced Yamaha to work hard in two main areas: increasing the M1's straight-line speed, and adapting its chassis so riders can fight with their V4 rivals in corners.

The factory's 2021 MotoGP king Fabio Quartararo is happy enough with progress, with Yamaha halving the M1's speed deficit at Sepang, from 4.1km/h last year to 2.1km/h.

"Already everything is looking much, much better than last year," he said. "In 2022 we had no engine, the same as the previous years, but the new engine is very promising. Our top speed is good but we have less downforce aero, so we need to find more power to use more downforce."

Downforce aero means that MotoGP bikes now need horsepower to go faster around corners, as well as faster down the straights. And V4s have more power, so they can use more downforce aero to improve their cornering performance. Yamaha used its first ground-effect fairing during testing, the design similar to that first used by Honda at the end of 2022.

"This fairing gives a bit more turning in slow corners, but our top speed is better with the other fairing, which has less drag," added the Frenchman.

Quartararo's main problem in the early stages of testing was his speed in qualifying mode: new tyres, low fuel.

"With old tyres I feel super happy," he added. "But with new tyres it's a nightmare. We are one second behind, and if you want to fight for victory now 80 percent comes from qualifying."

Teammate Franco Morbidelli, who never made it into the top six last year, has been working to adapt his technique to ride the M1 more aggressively, like Quartararo.

1. Quartararo and Marquez line astern at Sepang

2. The YZF-M1 with the new diffuser fairing

3. Quartararo's workplace

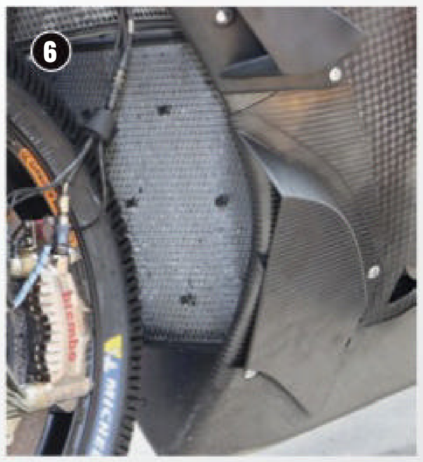
4. Morbidelli has spent a lot of time adapting his technique to the Yamaha

5. Can Quartararo become a double world champion in 2023?

6. Top speed is better and complemented by updated aero

THE TEAMS

Bike
YZR-M1
Factory team
Monster Energy Yamaha
Factory riders
Fabio Quartararo
Franco Morbidelli



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WORDS **NEIL MORRISON** + PHOTOGRAPHY **GOLD&GOOSE**

“I’M JUST HERE TO DO *the best* I CAN”

More settled, healthy and relishing a brand new challenge, Aussie Jack Miller is primed to hit season 2023 **head on**

No one can accuse Jack Miller of shying away from a challenge. The Australian fronts up to one of the biggest of his career in 2023, joining KTM after a five-year spell at Ducati, the marque that conquered all before it last year. If preseason is anything to go by, the Austrian factory still has some catching up to do. But it's a task the 28-year old is relishing.

For the first time in six seasons, Miller enters the first race knowing his future for the following season is already

sorted. The two-year deal on offer to partner Brad Binder in KTM's factory squad for 2023 and 2024 was one of several reasons he returns to the marque where he finished second in the 2014 Moto3 world title.

It's clear to even a casual observer of the sport that KTM isn't currently on Ducati's level. The three-day outing at Sepang in early February underlined there is still some way to go as Miller finished with the 18th fastest time, 1.012sec behind pace setter Luca Marini. As such, the four-time MotoGP race winner isn't expecting miracles at the beginning of his KTM tenure.

"For sure it's not easy. Switching manufacturers, bikes and riding styles all factors into it," he said ahead of the commencement of preseason testing. "It's never easy when you're stuck in your ways and habits you learned on another motorcycle. You have to get rid of them or adapt. I don't want to look at other people's results and base my adaptation off that. I'm just here to do the best I can.

"In a perfect world if we gel in the first tests then we'd be there in Portimao. But that's a perfect world. The biggest thing is stay fit and healthy, do as much on the bike to make it second nature as possible and understand what it needs. This first quarter is going to be the most crucial part of the year, just understanding the bike and what we need to do with it."

Miller wasn't only signed for his riding prowess (four wins and 22 podiums in 137 MotoGP starts). He comes from a five-year stretch at Ducati where he was partly responsible for its rise to current ruler of the class. As teammate Brad Binder stated: "He comes with all the knowledge of Ducati and the feeling he's gained over the year. That gives us a great opportunity to see which direction we need to move in."

Hiring the Australian continues the theme of KTM's recent strategy of aggressively acquiring figures from Ducati. Prior to last year, names such as Fabio Sterlacchini (Head of Technology MotoGP) and Francesco Guidotti (Team Manager), who worked with Miller at Pramac Ducati, were brought on board to bolster its ranks.

Now Cristhian Pupulin (Miller's crew chief) and Alberto Giribuola (Performance Engineer) have also joined from Bologna. Seeing some old faces from his Ducati days has helped the Australian

1. "It seems like we hit a wall" – the recent Sepang MotoGP test was a sobering one for Miller

2. Behind the screen of his new mount: 2023 is shaping as the ultimate challenge

3. Miller and his KTM crew chief, Christian Pupulin

4. Back on a KTM (other than his beloved dirtbike...) after an eight-year separation

5. The newest bushranger in the MotoGP paddock!

6. Can Miller become the first rider to win a MotoGP race for three different marques?

6

bed into KTM's new way of working.

"It's been really good to be back working with Francesco. We have a lot of experience together. He's a fantastic team boss. Then with Pipi my crew chief, to bring him across was a crucial part of it. It's good you're not learning new people, it's not completely foreign, nothing feels really new."

First impressions

The first touch with a new machine is often revealing. Valentino Rossi later reflected he knew within several laps of his first test with Ducati at the end of 2010 that the next two years would be a slog. It was tempting to assume Miller would think the same, given he was jumping off the bike that finished first and fifth in the championship to one that scored just two dry-weather podiums all year.

But Miller seemed pleasantly surprised by his first test aboard the RC16 at Valencia last November.

"That showed me a lot," he recently reflected. "I understood a lot more in a one-day test than I thought I could. I was able to get pretty comfortable relatively quick, make it feel a bit like second nature. We didn't get to play around that much. My biggest mindset was it's me riding the bike. I'm not listening to what's being said outside. I'm there to learn the bike for myself, to not let something niggle and influence my decision or riding. That helped.

> "I UNDERSTOOD A LOT MORE IN A ONE-DAY TEST THAN I THOUGHT I COULD. I WAS ABLE TO GET PRETTY COMFORTABLE RELATIVELY QUICKLY"

"What struck me the most riding the bike was how consistent the bike was. I don't want to say it was easy, because riding a MotoGP bike isn't easy, but the way the bike was configured was relatively easy to ride. The bike didn't want to wheelie too much, didn't want to slide too much. A lot of limitations, let's say, in the TC and wheelie department. But when the bike came alive there wasn't a lot of power there. That was the biggest thing initially.

"Then with KTM, just the professionalism inside the company, inside the project, the amount of guys here writing, taking notes, wanting to hear from you at the end of the day. They're working extremely hard to make this project succeed. And what struck me the most was how hungry these guys and excited they are to succeed.

"Of course, there are differences. With Ducati, leaving that team, that bike when I did, was my decision. It was something I felt comfortable about and still do – excited for the new challenge

"Working with guys like Fabiano, Pipi, Albie and Francesco, we've taken a lot of great guys from Ducati. I believe with the open mentality KTM has and the force they have behind the project, and these great minds involved, there's no telling where this thing can end. I'm honoured to be part of it.

"There are differences in the bike for sure. Nonetheless the KTM has, as we've seen in the past, its strong points and weak points. The goal is to eliminate as many weak points as possible. Having these guys come across, understanding what Ducati did in the past, and seeing whether some of the problems they had in the past correlate with KTM, and if they don't then it's about trying to come up with new solutions.

"Just from Valencia I felt there was a lot of potential with this motorcycle. With the right people around, we can make it work."

Challenges ahead

Not that it was all plain sailing. The Malaysian test underscored the scale of the task facing KTM. Across three days, Binder and Miller tried new engines, aerodynamic packages and other parts in a bid to piece the right package together – a tall order in just five days, especially as the Australian was still learning his new steed.

The fastest KTM finished 0.9sec off the quickest Ducati and, after a slow slip-off on the final day, Miller admitted he had "hit a wall" when understanding the best way forward.

"We're trying to understand what we need from the bike," he said. "It seems like we hit a wall so understanding in terms of geometry, what we can do to make me a feel a bit more comfortable. We can see on the data I'm suffering quite a lot compared to the other boys mid-corner, getting the thing to rotate and get off the turn.

"Every day I seem to hop on it and find something new, which is cool. It's exciting to adapt and understand because so many things are different. You can really see some of the positives in there. It's just about knowing how to ride this thing to exploit the strong points."

But the prizes of getting it right could land Miller in the history books. Should he become the third different rider to win aboard KTM machinery, he would pull off the unique feat of

> "THERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS, BUT I'M SURE AFTER THE FIRST ONE OR TWO EVERYONE WILL LOVE IT AND SOME WILL PREFER THE SPRINT RACES TO THE FULL ONES."

THRILLER
CAT

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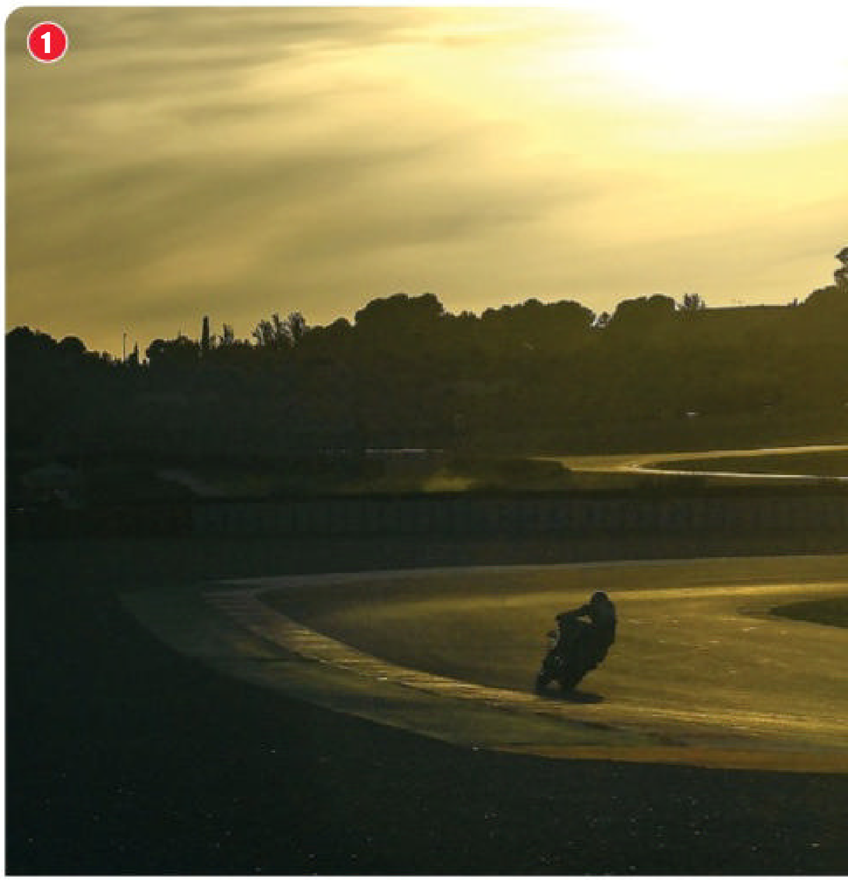

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winning premier class races with three different factories – something no other rider has managed in the four-stroke era.

"It's an amazing thing to be considered for," he said of the possibility. "I'm excited. We'll be pushing week in week out to make this succeed. I want to say I hope so, but MotoGP nowadays is no joke. We've done two of the three. Now we're stepping on the third so we'll give it a crack."

Psyched to sprint

This new chapter in Miller's career comes as MotoGP enters into a new era. For the first time in its 75-year history, the series will pit its competitors against one another in two races a weekend, rather than one. This new format, which sees riders race 42 times across 21 rounds, has been welcomed by the #43.

And there is good reason to suspect it will work to Miller's strengths. Firstly, the rider from Townsville's qualifying record has been excellent recently, as he posted 15 front-row starts across the past two seasons. And good starts and strong openings to races were also a trademark of 2022.

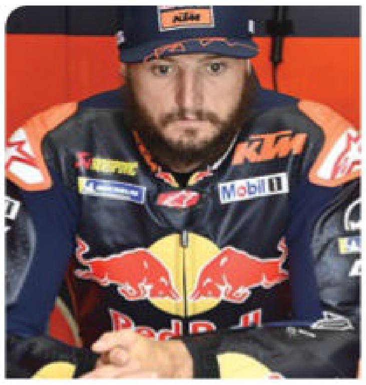
Could those traits lend themselves to the sprint format, where races will be held on Saturdays of race weekends over half-race distance.

"I would like to think so," said Miller. "Coming from Australia, a dirt track and motocross background where you race relatively short races, I did a dirt track race here at home and it took me half a day to understand how important the start and first corner is. If we look to the past, the first half of the races are my strongest.

"I'm super excited to have the sprint races this year to shake it up a bit, to be able to put on an extra show on Saturday for the fans. Also for the riders, MotoGP has been the same for 50 years. To be in a radical change, it's an amazing time to be here. There are some questions, but I'm sure after the first one or two everyone will love it and some will prefer the sprint races to the full ones."

And an afternoon of riding at Sepang in the rain underlined the RC16's potential when wet Michelin tyres are fitted.

"The bike has a huge potential in the wet," he said. "Maybe one of the weaker points in the dry becomes its strength in the wet, gaining that grip off the corners. We want to have that in the dry. But to have it in our arsenal, if it does rain on a Sunday, we're ready for it."



1. Miller's first hitout on the KTM RC16 at Valencia last November

2. The Aussie was just over one second slower than pacesetter, Luca Marini, at Sepang

3. Miller's great mate Toby Price is a KTM icon: will Miller reach similar giddy heights?

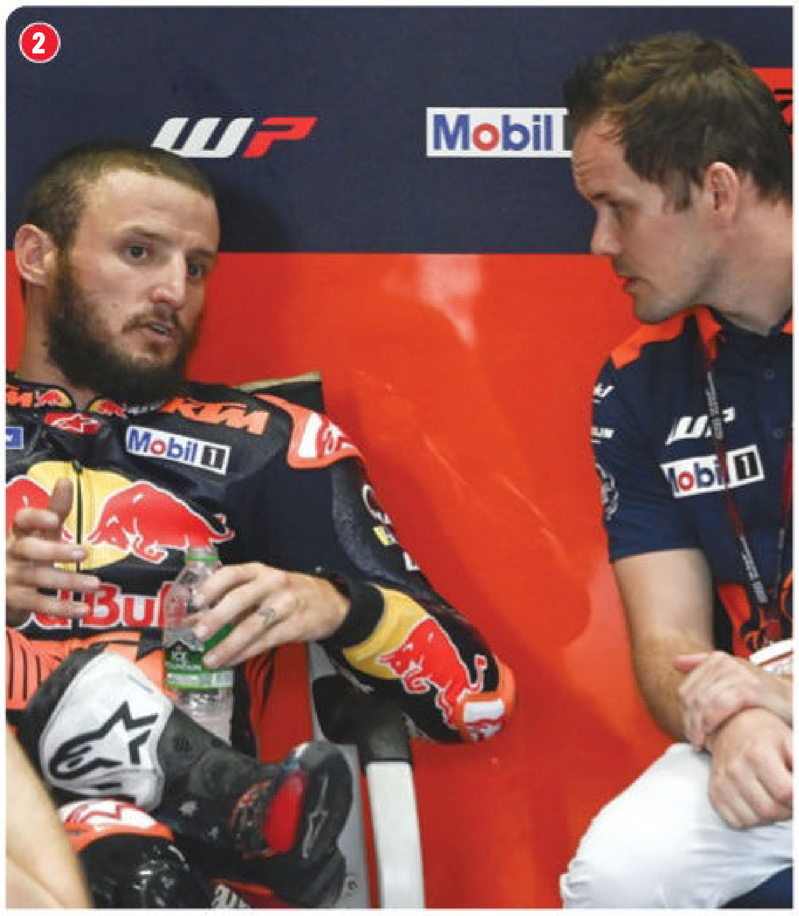
4. Like most of the factories, various aero packages have been put through their paces by KTM this preseason

5. Is that a cup of tea? He *has* mellowed...

1. More preseason grind; switching bikes is a tough ask, but Miller's got the mettle

2. Debrief time at Sepang

3. Binder and Miller: two bearded blokes from below the equator make up the 2023 KTM factory effort



Raised and ready

The Australian summer offered Miller a deserved break after a year that was memorable on both a professional and personal level. He married Ruby Mau at the start of October – just before his home race at Phillip Island – less than seven months after the pair got engaged.

In between motocross riding, competing at the final round of the Australian Superbike Championship at The Bend Motorsport Park and training for the year ahead, Miller got in some downtime before the schedule picked up again.

"Being back home has been really nice," he said. "I've been enjoying summer. I took some weeks off before Christmas to unwind. Now back into the full swing of things. We headed to New Zealand over the break and caught up with the family, and then after being in Austria we went for our honeymoon. It was really nice to have some downtime after such a long year and an even bigger year ahead."

Once known as something of a party animal, Miller cuts a more settled figure these days. It's something Guidotti immediately noticed when comparing the 2023 version of Jack to the rider he managed from 2018 to 2020.

"Jack's a different person," said the Italian team manager recently. "He grew up a lot in the last two years. He already made a big change during our days together. Also, we're three years older! So everybody is different, everything has changed quite a lot, especially after 2020 with Covid and everything.

"But Jack looks very mature now. He got married and for sure he's thinking more. I think it's the right moment to move from a comfortable zone as he had in Ducati. It's a new challenge. It's a strong challenge.

"But for sure he's really motivated from moving from a factory team to another factory team. It gives him a lot of confidence."

Ahead of arguably the biggest challenge of his career, that should stand the Australian in good stead in 2023. And every Aussie MotoGP fan will be behind him.

> "JACK LOOKS VERY MATURE NOW. HE GOT MARRIED AND FOR SURE HE'S THINKING MORE. I THINK IT'S THE RIGHT MOMENT TO MOVE FROM A COMFORTABLE ZONE"

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TOP THREE TV

① 2023 MotoGP, Rd1, LIVE

Fox Sports, Kayo & Video Pass

25-26 MARCH

Check website and local guides

The wait is over! MotoGP cranks up for another year at the 'roller coaster', Portimao, with a massive amount of intrigue - including Jack Miller's first ride on the factory KTM.

② 2023 ASBK, Rd2, LIVE

Stan, SBS & livestream

24-25 MARCH

Check website and local guides

Not only is ASBK returning to Sydney Motorsport Park after a long absence, but it will also be held under lights! Josh Waters got the jump on the pack in round one, but can he continue his dominance under the floodlights?

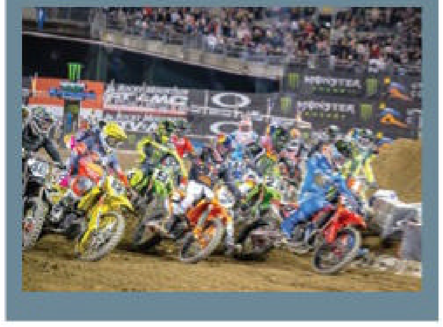
③ 2023 AMA SX, Rds10/11, LIVE

Fox Sports, Kayo & Video Pass

19/26 MARCH

Check website and local guides

Detroit and Seattle are next up for the AMA combatants, with Tomac, Webb and Sexton the current 450SX standouts, while the Aussies - Jet and Hunter - are in charge of the two 250SX titles. Still early days, though.



RACING WHERE & WHEN

ROAD RACING

2023 MOTOGP WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd1	26 Mar, Portimao, PT
Rd2	2 Apr, Termas de Rio Hondo, AR
Rd3	16 Apr, Austin, US
Rd4	30 Apr, Jerez, ES
Rd5	14 May, Le Mans, FR
Rd6	11 Jun, Mugello, IT
Rd7	18 Jun, Sachsenring, DE
Rd8	25 Jun, Assen, NL
Rd9	9 Jul, Sokol, KZ
Rd10	6 Aug, Silverstone, GB
Rd11	20 Aug, Spielberg, AT
Rd12	3 Sep, Barcelona, ES
Rd13	10 Sep, Misano, IT
Rd14	24 Sep, Buddh, IN
Rd15	1 Oct, Motegi, JN
Rd16	15 Oct, Mandalika, ID
Rd17	22 Oct, Phillip Island, AU
Rd18	29 Oct, Buriram, TH
Rd19	12 Nov, Sepang, MY
Rd20	19 Nov, Losail, QA
Rd21	26 Nov, Valencia, ES

2023 AUSTRALIAN SUPERBIKE CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd2	24-25 Mar, Sydney Motorsport Park, NSW
Rd3	28-30 Apr, Queensland Raceway, Qld
Rd4	16-18 Jun, Hidden Valley, NT
Rd5	14-16 Jul, Morgan Park Raceway, Qld
Rd6	27-29 Oct, Phillip Island, Vic
Rd7	1-3 Dec, The Bend, SA

2023 SUPERBIKE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd3	21-23 Apr, Assen, NL
Rd4	5-7 May, Barcelona, ES
Rd5	2-4 Jun, Misano, IT
Rd6	30 Jun-2 Jul, Donington Park, GB
Rd7	28-20 Jul, Most, CZ
Rd8	8-10 Sep, Magny-Cours, FR
Rd9	22-24 Sep, Aragon, ES
Rd10	29-Sep-1 Oct, Portimao, PT
Rd11	13-15 Oct, San Juan, AR
Rd12	TBA

2023 BRITISH SUPERBIKE CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd1	8-9 Apr, Silverstone, NTH
Rd2	30 Apr-1 May, Oulton Park, CHS
Rd3	20-21 May, Donington Park, LCE
Rd4	17-18 Jun, Knockhill, FIF
Rd5	8-9 Jul, Snetterton, NFK
Rd6	22-23 Jul, Brands Hatch (GP), KEN
Rd7	12-13 Aug, Thruxton, HAM
Rd8	27-28 Aug, Cadwell Park, LIN
Rd9	16-17 Sep, Oulton Park, CHS
Rd10	30 Sep-1 Oct, Donington Park (GP), LCE
Rd11	14-15 Oct, Brands Hatch (GP), KEN

OFF-ROAD RACING

2023 AUSTRALIAN HARD ENDURO CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd1	1-2 Apr, 'Kosciuszki Killer', Vic
Rd2	13-14 May, 'Mother of Mayhem', Vic
Rd3	24-25 Jun, 'Ironstone Extreme', Qld
Rd4	12-13 Aug, 'Hillstorm Challenge', NSW
Rd5	7-8 Oct, 'Goldfields Extreme', Qld

2023 AUSTRALIAN OFF-ROAD CHAMPIONSHIP

Rds1/2	25-26 Mar, Mendooran, NSW
Rds3/4	22-23 Apr, Queensland Moto Park, Qld
Rds5/6	22-23 Jul, Edenhope, Vic
Rds7/8	26-27 Aug, Keyneton, SA
Rds9/10	16-17 Sep, Kyogle, NSW
Rds11/12	14-15 Oct, Dungog, Qld

2023 AUSTRALIAN JUNIOR MX CHAMPIONSHIP

11-16 Jul, Alice Springs, NT

2023 CONDO 750

31 Mar-2 Apr, Condobolin, NSW

2023 FINKE DESERT RACE

9-12 Jun, Alice Springs, NT

2023 HATTAH DESERT RACE

30 Jun-2 Jul, Hattah, Vic

2023 AUSTRALIAN JNR. DIRT TRACK CHAMPIONSHIP

15-16 Jul, Barleigh Ranch, NSW

2023 AUSTRALIAN SNR DIRT TRACK CHAMPIONSHIP

7-8 Oct, Diamond Park, Vic

2023 AUSTRALIAN JUNIOR TRACK CHAMPIONSHIP

15-16 Apr, Arundel, Qld

2023 AUSTRALIAN SENIOR TRACK CHAMPIONSHIP

28-29 Oct, Barleigh Ranch, NSW

2023 AUSTRALIAN FLAT TRACK NATIONALS

Rds1/2	1-2 Jul, Appin, NSW
Rds3/4	16-17 Sep, Brisbane, Qld
Rds5/6	11-12 Nov, Taree, NSW

2023 AMA SX

Rd10	19 Mar, Detroit, MI
Rd11	26 Mar, Seattle, WA
Rd12	9 Apr, Glendale, AZ
Rd13	16 Apr, Atlanta, GA
Rd14	23 Apr, East Rutherford, NJ
Rd15	30 Apr, Nashville, TN
Rd16	7 May, Denver, CO
Rd17	14 May, Salt Lake City, UT

2023 WSX

Rd1	1 Jul, Birmingham, GB
Rd2	22 Jul, Lyon, FR
Rd3	30 Sep, TBA, SE Asia
Rd4	14 Oct, Dusseldorf, DE
Rd5	28 Oct, Vancouver, CA
Rd6	24-25 Nov, Melbourne, AU

2023 MOTOCROSS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd2	26 Mar, Riola Sardo, Sardinia, IT
Rd3	8/10 Apr, Frauenfeld, CH
Rd4	16 Apr, Pietramurata, IT
Rd5	30 Apr, Agueda, PT
Rd6	7 May, Arroyomolinos, ES
Rd7	21 May, Villars sous Ecot, FR
Rd8	4 Jun, Kegums, LV
Rd9	11 Jun, Teutschenthal, DE
Rd10	25 Jun, Sumbawa, ID
Rd11	2 Jul, Lombok, ID
Rd12	16 Jul, Loket, CZ
Rd13	23 Jul, Lommel, BE
Rd14	30 Jul, Hyvinkaa, FI
Rd15	13 Aug, Uddevalla, SE
Rd16	20 Aug, Arnhem, NL
Rd17	3 Sep, Afyonkarahisar, TR
Rd18	17 Sep, Thanh Hoa, VN
Rd19	15 Oct, Matterley Basin, GB

2023 MOTOCROSS OF NATIONS

22 Oct, Ernee, FR

2023 JUNIOR MOTOCROSS WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

9Jul, Bucharest, RO

2023 ENDUROGP WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP*

Rd1	31 Mar-2 Apr, San Remo, IT
Rd2	5-7 May, Lalin, ES
Rd3	26-28 May, Heinola, FI
Rd4	1-3 Jun, Skövde, SE
Rd5	30 Jun-2 Jul, Gelnica, SK
Rd6	7-9 Jul, TBA
Rd7	29 Sep-1 Oct, Valpaços, PT
Rd8	6-8 Oct, St Andre, PT

2023 HARD ENDURO WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd1	17-20 May, XCross, RS
Rd2	8-11 Jun, Erzbergrodeo, AT
Rd3	7-9 Jul, Abestone, IT
Rd4	25-29 Jul, Romaniacs, RO
Rd5	26-27 Aug, Outliers, CA
Rd6	28-20 Sep, Roof of Africa, LS
Rd7	3-4 Nov, GetZen Rodeo, DE

2023 SPEEDWAY GRAND PRIX

Rd1	29 Apr, Donji Kraljevec, HR
Rd2	13 May, Warsaw, PL
Rd3	3 Jun, Prague, CZ
Rd4	10 Jun, Teterow, DE
Rd5	24 Jun, Gorzow, PL
Rd6	23 July, Malilla, SE
Rd7	12 Aug, Riga, LV
Rd8	2 Sep, Cardiff, GB
Rd9	16 Sep, Vojens, DK
Rd10	30 Sep, Torun, PL

2023 TRIAL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd1	14-16 Apr, Arteixo, ES
Rd2	21-23 Apr, Gouveia, PT
Rd3	19-21 May, Motegi, JP
Rd4	09-11 Jun, Baldasserrona, SM
Rd5	16-18 Jun, Sant Julià de Lòria, AD
Rd6	21-23 Jul, Sestriere, IT
Rd7	01-03 Sep, Vertolaye, FR

2023 WOMEN'S TRIAL WORLD CHMPIONSHIP

Rd1	14-16 Apr, Arteixo ES
Rd2	21-23 Apr, Gouveia, PT
Rd3	19-21 May, Motegi, JP
Rd4	21-23 Jul, Sestriere, IT
Rd5	1-3 Sep, Vertolay, FR

2023 ICE SPEEDWAY WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Final	1-2 Apr, Heerenveen, NL

RIDE DAYS & SCHOOLS

Phillip Island Ride Days / 0490 281 840
Phillip Island, Vic

Sydney Motorsport Park Ride Days/0490 281 840
SMSP, NSW

Murray Valley Training Co 0459 415 787
Barnawartha North, Vic

Champion's Ride Days (07) 3287 4144
Broadford, Vic
Collie Motorplex, WA
Morgan Park, Qld
The Bend, SA

Trakdayz 0401 484 898
Barbagallo, WA

California Superbike School / 1300 793 423
Phillip Island, Vic
SMSP, NSW
Broadford, Vic
Morgan Park Qld

Mount Gambier MCC Coaching / Ride Days 0448 951 163
Mac Park, SA

Ride-Tek MTA 1300 788 382
Sandown, Vic

Ridedays WA (08) 9409 1002
Barbagallo, WA
Collie, WA

Top Rider 1300 131 362
Various venues, Qld

Phoenix MCC Junior Coaching 0403 386 788
Tailem Bend, SA
Mallala, SA

RALLIES & SHOWS

19 MARCH 2023

Black Dog Ride, departing from Allies Pub, Myers Flat, Vic. Raising awareness of depression and suicide prevention. For more information contact ride coordinator Andrea Schloss, bendigo@blackdogride.org.au, or visit www.blackdogride.com.au.

19-25 MARCH 2023

Variety Adventure Ride finishing in Lightning Ridge, NSW. Starting in Dubbo, exploring the amazing Gammon and Flinders Ranges, seeing the harsh elements of the Strzelecki Desert, visiting the iconic Cameron Corner and finishing in Lightning Ridge. The route will be following remote tracks and chasing beautiful outback sunsets. The event is not a race: it is an adventure exploring remote parts of our beautiful country. Information at www.variety.org.au/nsw/event/varietyadventureride/.

24-26 MARCH 2023

Australian Vespa Days, Wangaratta, Vic. Open to all Vespa models. On Saturday evening, there'll be a gala dinner with awards and entertainment. Wangaratta offers excellent day-tripping opportunities, with the famed King Valley wine and cheese region just up the road. For the more audacious, the likes of Mount Buffalo and Mount Hotham are a little further afield… If you'd prefer to ride en masse, two ride-outs are planned for Friday afternoon, four on Saturday, and one on Sunday. For information and to purchase tickets, visit www.stickytickets.com.au/ie7ua/australian_vespa_days.aspx.

25 MARCH-1 APRIL 2023

APC Rally, eight days, with the course a massive loop of the best riding in Australia. Riders are to make their way to one of five starting points. The course is approximately 3500km in length. The rally is designed so riders can take easy options around more technical sections if they have a large touring bike, or if they simply don't have the confidence to tackle them. Riders are supplied with comprehensive track notes. All riders need is a functioning GPS or phone app. Information at apcrally.net.

16 APRIL 2023

Mirboo North Motorcycle Swap Meet Castle Street Oval, Mirboo North (Vic). No car parts, bric-a-brac or household stuff. Coffee and barbecue on site, and entry is $10 per person. Gates open at 6:30am for setup. For more information on the bi-annual event, tel 0428 684 267, look up 'mirboo north motorcycle show' on Facebook or email mirboo.n.motorcycle.show@outlook.com.

6 MAY 2023

Dubbo Motorbike Rally Dubbo, NSW. From Harleys to Hondas, Buells to Beemers and Piaggios to posties – all bikes and riders welcome. The event will be held in Talbragar Street from 9am to 4pm (you can park in 'Bike Street' any time, for as long as you like, during this period). Just don't leave your ride at the motel, as everyone else wants to see it too! There will be stalls, entertainment, local rides and much more. For more information see the event website at dubbomotorbikerally.com.

7 MAY 2023

The Berry Bike Show, Berry Bowling Club, NSW. Trophies, stalls, raffles, sausage sizzle. Registration 8:30am-midday, judging 12:30pm. Entry $5.00 per bike, public entry gold coin donation. Judging categories: Classic European, Classic British, Classic Asian, Classic American, Modified, Ladies, Kids, Modern, Dirt/Trail Bike, Sidecar, Oldest Bike, Unrestored, Bike of The Show.

18-21 MAY 2023

The 37th Bike Fest International, Lignano Sabbiadoro, Italy. The BFI has many attractions: a 7km area for off-road activities, moto tours, demo rides, rock music, cuisines galore, custom machines, a custom show, and a massive parade. Entry is free. For more information, visit the 'Biker Fest International' Facebook site.

20-21 MAY 2023

Great Southern Adventure Rally, location TBA, SA (north of Adelaide). Start at 10.30am; stands up at 11.30am. An adventure event focused on fun and teamwork. Anyone on a street-legal bike over 150cc can join in on the action. Teams of at least two, but you are welcome to join up with any other teams on the day. Riding gear for light to medium off-road, appropriate tyres, camping can be arranged, one Twitter account required per team, bring water. For details and registration visit www.greatsouthernadventurerally.com.au.

27-28 MAY 2023

Historic Winton, Winton, Vic. The 46th car and motorcycle event will be held in its usual spectacular style with races, displays, trade stalls, a Sunday parade and delicious food. This is a discounted event and camping tickets are available at the website www.ticketebo.com.au/historicwinton. For the latest Historic Winton news visit www.historicwinton.org or follow on Facebook or Instagram @historicwinton.

7-11 JUNE 2023

Bike Fest Oz in Coolangatta and surrounds is shaping up to be Australia's version of Sturgis or Daytona Bike Week. Events include the Rolling Thunder Parade, poker run, beach rides, opening ball and a concert and party which will signal the end of the five-day event. Early-bird packages are available for $500 and get you into the Thunder Parade, guaranteed access to the accomodation packages and other limited ticketed events, a tourist info pack, a T-shirt and a bumper sticker. For more information check out bikefestoz.com.au.

11 JUNE 2023

Border Swap Meet, Tweed Heads, NSW. To be held at Recreation Street Park in Florence Street. Gates open for vendors at 5am. For details shoot an email through to contactsecretary.thmcec@gmail.com or call the club on 0404 222 422.

16 JULY 2023

Club Laverda Councours, Redland Showgrounds, Cleveland, Qld. A static motorcycle display with 60 trophies and $2000 for the best machine entered on the day. The event is an alcohol-free family day raising funds for the Make a Wish Foundation. A $10 gate fee applies to patrons over 15 years and includes on-site motorcycle parking. There's no fee for entering machines for judging, but they must be in running order. Entertainment includes free face painting and kids' rides; wide variety of food vendors. For information call 0404 540 617 or email concours@clublaverdaqld.com.au.

26-28 AUGUST 2023

TTT Rally, follow red and white TTT signs 10km north of Taralga, NSW. An overnight ride, with camping and a huge bonfire. BYO everything else. Badge $25 on the day. The TTT Rally (the TTT part an acronym for 'Thrashers Terrifying Treck') is a favourite of the Clubman Tourers. If you're interested in taking part visit www.clubman.org.au.

8-10 SEPTEMBER 2023

Ragged Fringe Rally, Bretti Reserve, NSW. Annual rally for the Moto Guzzi Club NSW. Firewood will be provided by the club and rally badges and T-shirts will be available for purchase. Entry fee is $30. The rally officially starts on Saturday morning however many choose to arrive on the Friday. There will be a number of meeting points for group rides to the rally on either day. See www.mgoa.org.

19 SEPTEMBER 2023

31st Annual Border Poker Run Tweed Heads, NSW. All makes and models welcome. Make sure you keep an eye on the 'Tweed Heads Motorcycle Enthusiasts Club' Facebook page as more information comes to hand.

22-24 SEPTEMBER 2023

Harley-Davidson National HOG Rally, The Bend Motorsport Park, Tailem Bend, SA. Highlights will include night drags, bagger racing, private track sessions, a chapter parade and test-ride sessions. Off-track, there will be live music, interactive tech displays, chapter games, guided rides through the local region and a host of vendors. The event marks the pinnacle of year-long celebrations as the brand commemorates 120 years and 40 years of HOG in Australia. For information and ticketing see www.hog120.com or socials at @harleyaustralia.

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AGV SPORTMODULAR

ON THE FLIP SIDE

This AGV could be one of the best-looking and lightest flip-up lids yet

There's no doubt in the past, flip-up modular helmets have accompanied grey moto-nomads like fedora hats accompany insta-influencers... they seem an inseparable pairing. But things are changing and the latest Sportmodular from Italian manufacturer AGV is no doubt leading the way.

At just 1295g, and made from carbon fibre, this lightweight lid has got to be one of the safest offerings in the world of modular helmets. What is immediately noticeable is the hingeing helmet does not look or feel anything like its bulky predecessors of yesteryear. Gone are the days of bulging pivot-points adorning a weighty dome – in fact the Sportmodular doesn't even look like a flip-up lid. This was proven on AMCN's recent nakedbike test when my fellow two-wheeled explorers commented on the attractiveness of my new 'stack-hat' before I'd flipped it up, at which point a gasp turned into a "bloody hell, I didn't even know it was modular".

The Sportmodular's lid-full of safety in a featherlight offering is achieved via heaps of trendy tech including carbon-fibre construction, five-density EPS structure, AGV's visor lock system, and titanium double-D retention. In fact, it achieves the safety standards in the region of AGV's MotoGP helmets. Thankfully, I've not tested impact resistance but I can assure you it 'feels the goods' and offers limited flex. Comfort is delivered in the form of AGV's reversible liner, which is paired with the helmet's integrated ventilation system.

One side of liner that encases the crown of the head is fuzzy to keep riders warm when it's cooler, and the reverse side is smooth to remain cooler when it's hot.

During our three-day, 1500km ride, I rode and photographed much of the time without removing my lid. I was super-impressed with ventilation performance in both rain and sun, and the helmet remained fog, condensation and sweat free. The visor is Pinlock compatible, which is included in the box, so fog management is excellent. And when it gets bright, the in-built drop-down sun visor, or optional tinted or iridium external visors, mean users are spoilt for choice for reducing glare. My prescription specs sat comfortably, with ample clearance to both the external and internal visors and, even through glasses, a sun-visor, pinlock and outer visor, I had excellent vision.

There is no doubt $999 is a hefty chunk of change, but if you're considering the benefits of a modular helmet and looking for a high-quality lid, then AGV's Sportmodular should be on your radar. I hope to use and abuse the AGV sport modular over coming months and will update you on the goods, the bads and the everything in betweens once I've got more kays under its belt.

MARK 'WATTO' WATSON

JUST ARRIVED!

AGV Sportmodular

$999

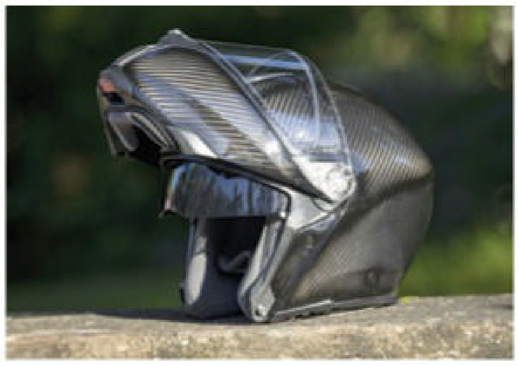
Sizes S-XL

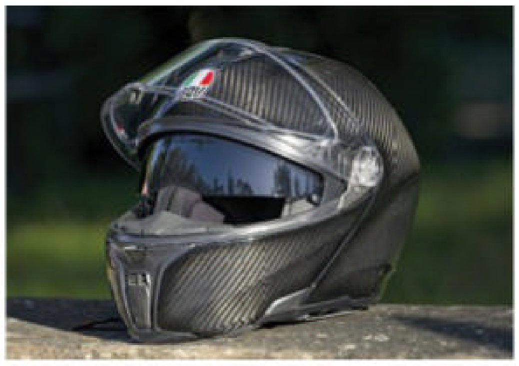
Colours Glossy Carbon or Matt Carbon

Link International

www.agvhelmets.com.au

☎ (07) 3382 5000





UGLYFISH ROCKET PHOTOCHROMIC MOTORCYCLE GLASSES

Star Rating

TESTED!

UglyFish Rocket
$84.95
(std lens)
$159.95
(photochromic lenses)
$159.95
(polarised lenses)

UglyFish
unglyfisheyewear.com
☎ 1300 369 574

FISH FACE

Aussie sunglasses company UglyFish is celebrating its 20th year. I bought my first pair of UglyFish Motorcycle Glasses more than 10 years ago and was impressed by them from the outset.

Features of the UglyFish moto range include super-tough polycarbonate lenses to protect your eyes from stones and the like, foam inserts to keep the wind (and bugs) out while riding, and removable temples (arms) that can be replaced with a supplied elastic strap for a more secure fit.

My original UglyFish sunnies are the Glide model with the standard smoke lenses. One of the logos has gone AWOL and there are a few scratches on the frame, but other than that they are still going strong. This time around, however, I opted to try the Rocket frame with transitioning photochromic lenses.

The Rocket frame houses larger lenses and I prefer the shape. Those lenses are again shatterproof and impact-resistant polycarbonate, but the photochromic tech means they transition from almost clear to dark smoke as they are subjected to more ambient light, providing UV protection when they are at their darkest, and lightening up enough that you can wear them while riding at night.

Like the other moto models, the Rocket has a removable foam seal and the temples can be replaced with an elastic strap. If you lose any bits, both the strap and foam are available to purchase separately as spare parts.

Finally, all UglyFish moto sunnies are supplied with a microfibre pouch and a quality zippered hardcase with a clip so you can attach them to your jeans or wherever.

DEAN MELLOR

SIDI META WOMENS BOOT

A PINK FIT

SIDI
SIDI
SIDI
SIDI
SIDI

I'm not into pink riding gear, in fact I'll go to great lengths to avoid it, but the features and mostly-grey colour scheme of Sidi's Meta riding shoe convinced me to not only put my grudges aside and try them on, but to pull my wallet out and put my money where my mouth is.

I opted for the Sidi over its rival brands for a couple of reasons. Firstly, styling; I still wanted it to look like a proper riding shoe. Those ones that go to great lengths to look like a casual high-top skate shoe are clever, but they're not my bag. Nor did I want the extreme look of a short race-style boot, complete with toe sliders and sewn-on plastic protectors all over a leather shoe. And while there were a few to choose between once I whittled down my styling preference, I settled on the Sidis because they were both more comfortable than the others I tried on and also less expensive than the remaining options.

While there is a bit of external protection sewn on, it's not offensive or immediately noticeable, and the velcro closure negates any concerns I have about riding with shoelaces - and the laces are actually recessed in the top of the shoe, too, which is a nice feature. They're high at the sides to cover my protruding ankle bones, but low at the back which means I can be on the balls of my feet when riding cramped sportsbikes and not have anything digging in.

The grey suede looks great in my opinion and they've got reflective bits to increase visibility for night-time riding. There's even painted-on 'rubber' shift pads on both shoes which is again inoffensive if I'm wandering around the shops.

I've only worn them on a handful of occasions, but once I've lived with them for a while and given them a thorough test, I'll be back to let you know what I like and don't like, and how they hold up after a lot more use.

KEL BUCKLEY

JUST ARRIVED!

Sidi Meta boot
Womens
$199
Sizes
37-41
Colours
Pink/grey

Mcleod Accessories
mcleodaccessories.com.au
☎ 1300 300 191

06 THINGS YOU NEED

① WHAT'S THE VECTOR, HECTOR?

Whites Powersports

From $429

☎ (03) 8720 6000

🖱 whitesmoto.com.au

The LS2 Vector II Techbot helmet has a fibreglass composite shell, available in three sizes, and a multi-density EPS layer. It also has a removable and washable hypoallergenic liner, laser-cut foam, a chin curtain and a UV-, scratch- and fog-reistant visor. A Pinlock Max Vision is included.

② LOOK DOWN AT THE STARS

Moto National

$249.95

☎ (07) 3120 4228

🖱 falcoboots.com.au

No one will miss you in a pair of these striking Falco Starboy 3 Fluro Yellow boots. They feature a Micro-Synth upper and Air-Tech ventilated inserts, as well as D30 ankle cups for protection, a laces closure, an inner cuff sock lining and a groovy translucent rubber sole. Men's sizes 42-47.

③ SAND BAGS

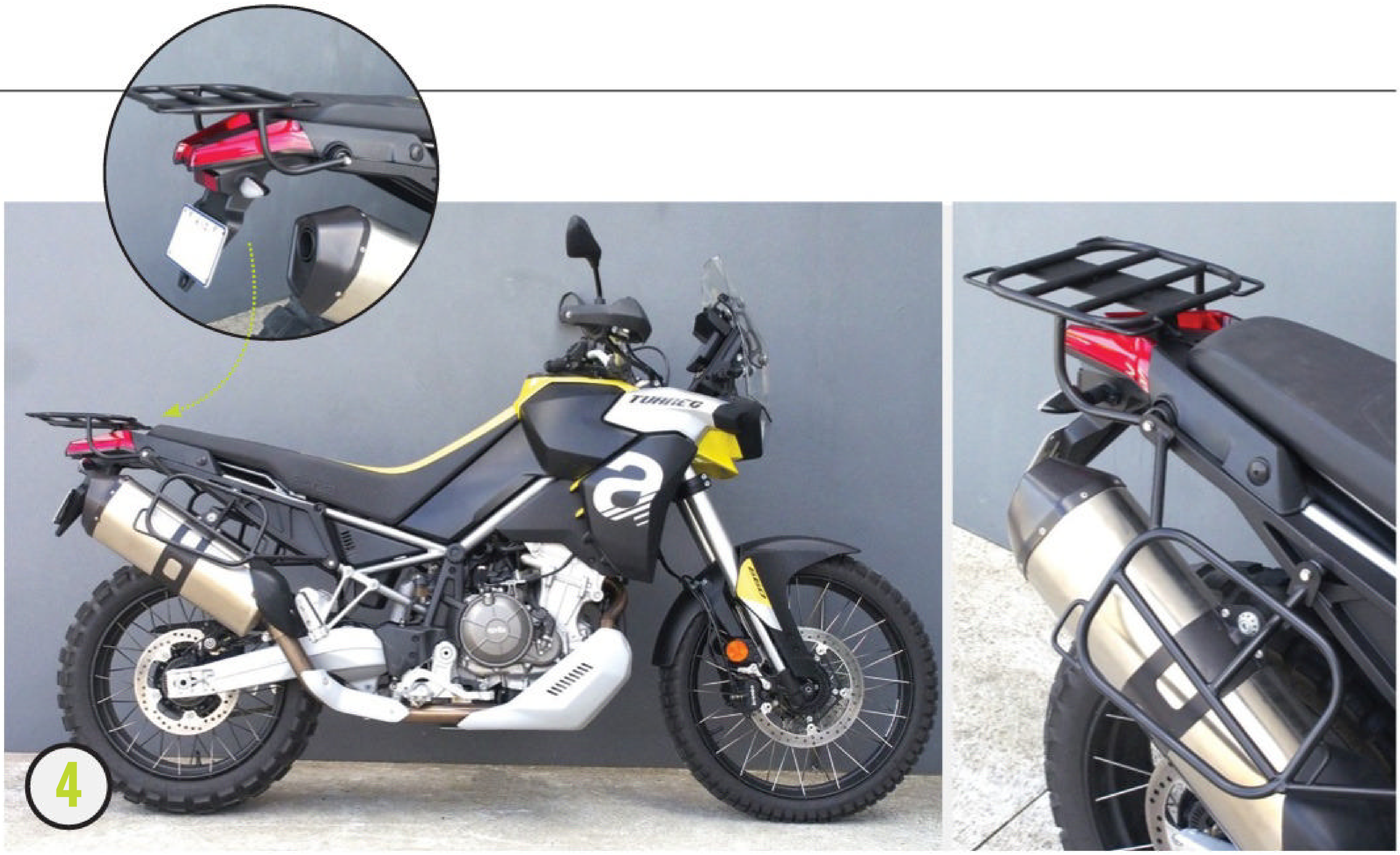
Kriega Australia

From $439

☎ 0409 959 737

🖱 kriega.com.au

Kriega's Roland Sands Design Roam 34 Backpack is manufactured from wax cotton with 1000D Cordura and a Quadloc-Lite harness. It has a waterproof roll-top laptop pocket, a 4L zip compartment with organiser pockets and a spacious main compartment with zip access. Expandable from 22-30L.



4

4 BACK RACK

Andy Strapz

$375

☎ (03) 9786 3445
andystrapz.com

Andy Strapz has developed a new rear rack to suit the Aprilia Tuareg 660. It features a mild-steel tubular frame with a black, powder coat finish, and allows for light gear carrying while retaining easy removal of the bike's seat. It can be run with or without Andy Strapz side frames, which allow you to carry even more gear.

5 CORSA COVER

Link International

From $59.90

☎ (07) 3382 5000
linkint.com.au

The La Corsa motorcycle cover is made from 250g PVC and cotton. It is claimed to be non-scratch, non-abrasive, mildew resistant, lightweight and soft on paint. Features include a windproof buckle, double-lock stitches, interlock seams and rot-proof thread. It comes in a storage bag and in sizes S-2XL.

6 SPECIAL AGENT

Cassons Australia

$1199.95

☎ (02) 8882 1900
cassonsmedia.com

The Arai Quantic helmet is now available in a new Ray Graphic; the Ray White and the Ray Black. The Quantic offers the ultimate in protection and features an aerodynamic shape to slip through the air efficiently. It also comes standard with Arai's Pro Shade visor valued at $129.95. Sizes XS-XL.

5

6

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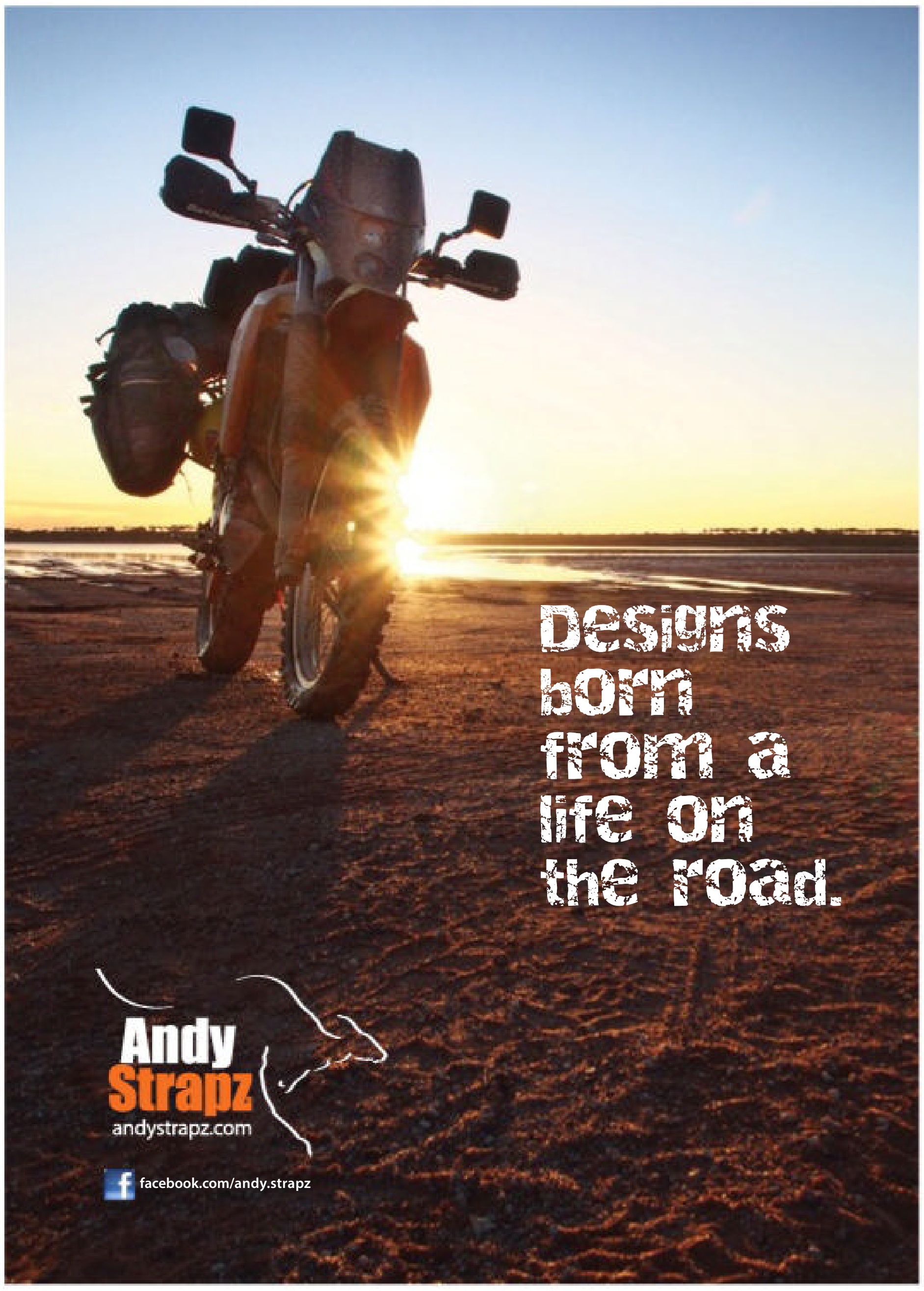
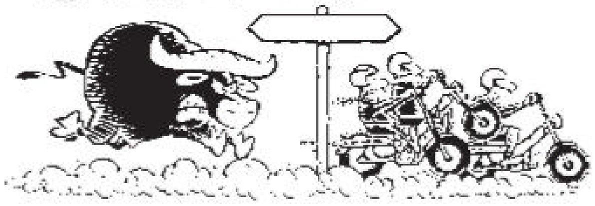


Designs born from a life on the road.
Andy Strapz
andystrapz.com
facebook.com/andy.strapz

Postie Bike CHALLENGE



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Outback Adventure via Hells Gate

2-13 Sep 2023

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www.postiebikechallenge.org Ph. 0411 090 891

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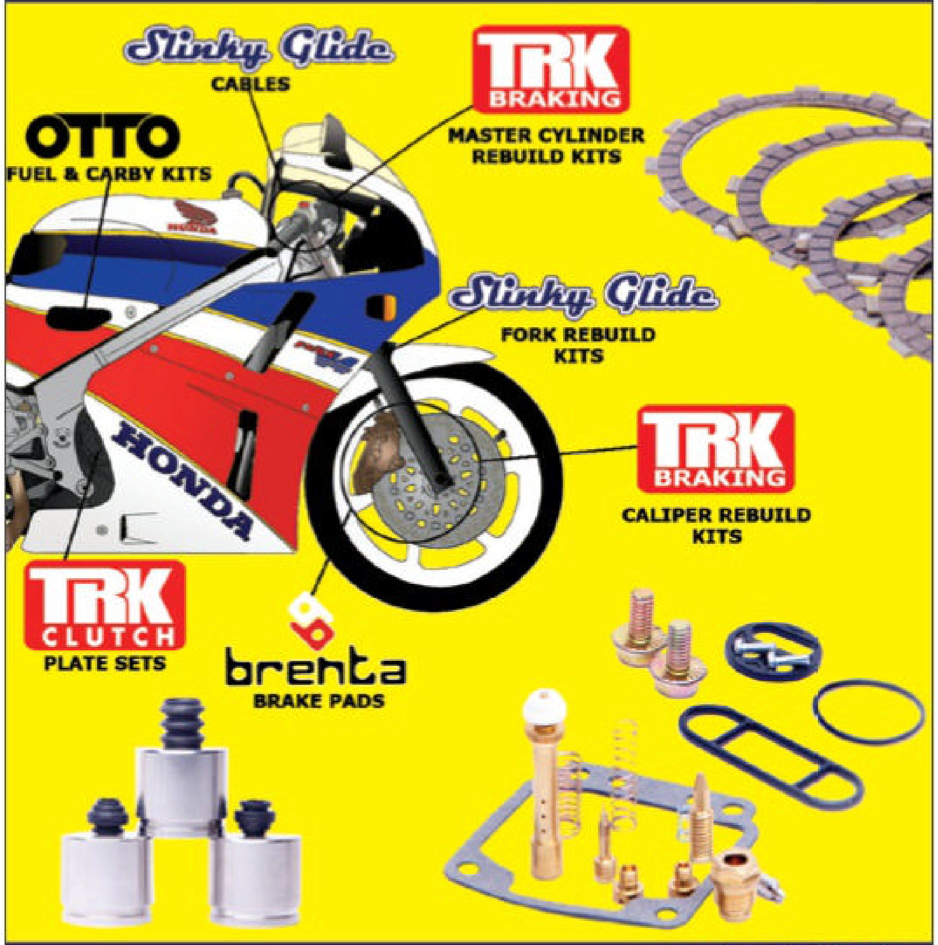
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APRILIA
aprilia.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
SR GT 125	$7440	✓
SR GT 125 Sport	$7540	✓
RS 660	$21,230	✓
RS 660 LAMS	$20,830	✓
Tuono 660	$20,430	✗
Tuono 660 LAMS	$20,530	✓
Tuareg 660	$22,230	✗
Tuareg 660 LAMS	$22,230	✓
Tuono V4	$28,830	✗
Tuono Factory	$33,330	✗
RSV4	$31,830	✗
RSV4 Factory	$38,930	✗

BENELLI
benelli.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
TnT 135 CBS	$4590	✓
TRK 502	$9990	✓
TRK 502X	$10,690	✓
Leoncino 500	$9890	✓
Leoncino 500 Trail	$10,390	✓
Leoncino 800	$13,490	✗
Leoncino 800 Trail	$13,990	✗
502C	$10,590	✓
752S	$12,990	✗
TNT 600i	$11,790	✓

BETA
betamotor.com.au

Plus on-road costs

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
RR 125 2T	$12,295	✓
RR 200 2T	$13,395	✓
RR 250 2T	$13,595	✓
RR 300 2T	$14,395	✓
RR 350 4T EFI	$14,195	✓
RR 390 4T EFI	$14,495	✓
RR 430 4T EFI	$14,695	✓
RR 480 4T EFI	$14,995	✓
X-Trainer 250 2T	$11,195	✓
X-Trainer 300 2T	$11,495	✓

BMW
bmwmotorrad.com.au

Plus on-road costs (from August 2022 production)

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
F 900 XR	$18,670	✗
F 900 R	$15,320	✗
S 1000 XR	$29,780	✗
M 1000 RR	$52,440	✗
S 1000 RR	$25,750	✗
R 1250 RS	$27,240	✗
R 1250 RT	$37,840	✗
K 1600 GT	$42,820	✗
K 1600 GTL	$44,520	✗
K 1600 B	$42,820	✗
K 1600 Grand America	$44,290	✗
G 310 R	$7990	✓
F 900 R	$15,420	✗
S 1000 R	$22,090	✗
M 1000 R	$32,290	✗
R 1250 R	$26,320	✗
R 18	$23,140	✗
R 18 Classic	$25,840	✗
R 18 B Deluxe	$35,400	✗
R 18 Transcontinental	$37,940	✗
R nineT	$25,490	✗
R nineT Pure	$20,210	✗
R nineT Scrambler	$21,410	✗
R nineT Urban G/S	$21,260	✗
G 310 GS	$8390	✓
F 750 GS	$17,945	✗
F 850 GS	$22,005	✗
F 850 GS Adventure	$23,830	✗
R 1250 GS	$31,320	✗
R 1250 GS Adventure	$33,305	✗
C 400 GT	$11,740	✓
C 400 X	$10,490	✓
CE 04	$21,900	✓

BRP
au.brp.com

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Ryker 600	$15,199	✓
Ryker 900	$17,749	✗
Ryker Rally 900	$19,799	✗
Spyder F3 S	$31,149	✗
Spyder F3 LTD	$35,699	✗
Spyder RT LTD	$41,449	✗

CFMOTO
cfmoto.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
150NK	$4290	✓
300NK	$5490	✓
300SR	$6290	✓
650MT	$8290	✓
650GT	$8490	✓
650NK	$8290	✓
700CL-X Heritage	$9490	✗
700CL-X Sport	$10,490	✗
800MT Sport	$12,990	✗
800MT Touring	$14,490	✗

DUCATI
ducati.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Multistrada V4	$30,800	✗
Multistrada V4 S	$35,000	✗
Multistrada V4 S Sport	$42,900	✗
Multistrada V4 Pikes Peak	$45,000	✗
Multistrada V2	$23,200	✗
Multistrada V2 S	$25,700	✗
DesertX	$24,700	✗
Hypermotard 950	$23,100	✗
Hypermotard 950 RVE	$24,700	✗
Hypermotard 950 SP	$28,900	✗
Streetfighter V2	$23,200	✗
Streetfighter V4	$32,400	✗
Streetfighter V4 S	$37,000	✗
Streetfighter V4 SP	$48,400	✗
Monster	$19,200	✗
Monster+	$19,800	✗
Monster SP	$23,200	✗
Monster 659	$13,500	✓
Supersport	$20,900	✗
Supersport S	$23,200	✗
Scrambler Urban Motard	$18,900	✗
Scrambler Icon	$15,600	✗
Scrambler Icon Dark	$14,900	✗
Scrambler Desert Sled	$20,000	✗
Scrambler Nightshift	$18,300	✗
Scrambler 1100 Dark PRO	$19,100	✗
Scrambler 1100 PRO	$20,390	✗
Scrambler 1100 Tribute Pro	$21,300	✗
Scrambler 1100 Sport PRO	$24,200	✗
Panigale V4	$34,700	✗
Panigale V4 S	$43,900	✗
Panigale V4 SP2	$56,900	✗
Panigale V2	$24,900	✗
Diavel 1260	$32,800	✗
Diavel 1260 S	$38,400	✗
Diavel V4	$41,100	✗
XDiavel Dark	$31,800	✗
XDiavel S	$38,900	✗
XDiavel Nera	$44,900	✗

ENERGICA
australianelectricmotorco.com/energica-motorcycles

Plus on-road costs

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Experia	$48,164	✗
Ego	$41,725	✗
Ego+	$52,233	✗
Ego+ RS	$55,329	✗
Ribelle	$50,374	✗
Ribelle RS	$52,470	✗
Esseesse9	$35,478	✗
Esseesse9+	$46,563	✗

GASGAS
gasgasaustralia.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
EC 250	$15,599	✓
EC 250F	$15,599	✓
EC 300	$17,069	✓
EC 350F	$16,659	✓
SM 700	$19,105	✓
ES 700	$19,105	✓

H-D
harley-davidson.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Softail Standard	$22,995	✗
Nightster	$23,995	✗
Street Bob 114	$26,250	✗
Sport Glide	$29,750	✗
Low Rider S	$30,750	✗
Low Rider ST	$35,250	✗
Fat Bob 114	$31,750	✗
Heritage Classic 114	$36,250	✗
Fat Boy 114	$36,250	✗
Breakout 114	$36,250	✗
Road King Special	$39,495	✗
Road Glide Special	$41,995	✗
Road Glide ST	$44,995	✗
Sportster S	$26,495	✗
Street Glide Special	$41,995	✗
Street Glide ST	$44,995	✗
Ultra Limited	$43,995	✗
Freewheeler	$49,250	✗
Tri Glide Ultra	$59,250	✗
CVO Street Glide	$58,250	✗
CVO Road Glide	$58,750	✗
CVO Limited	$61,750	✗
CVO Tri Glide	$76,250	✗
Pan America 1250S	$33,495	✗

HONDA
hondamotorcycles.com.au

Plus on-road costs

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
GL1800 Goldwing DCT	$41,999	✗
GL1800 Goldwing Tour Prem DCT	$49,999	✗
NT1100	$21,690	✗
NT1100D DCT	$22,699	✗
CBR1000RR-R SP	$52,999	✗
CBR650R	$12,099	✓
CBR600RR	$27,599	✗

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MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
CBR500R	$9999	✓
CB125E	$2869	✓
Grom	$4249	✓
Monkey	$6649	✓
CB500F	$9499	✓
CB650R	$11,499	✓
CB300R	$7199	✓
CMX1100 DCT	$19,649	×
CMX1100	$18,549	×
CMX500	$9149	✓
NSS350A Forza	$9549	✓
ADV150	$6149	✓
PCX150	$5299	✓
C125 Super Cub	$7378	✓
CT125	$7449	✓
NSC110 Dio	$3349	✓
MW110 Benly	$3999	✓
CRF1100 Africa Twin	$22,999	×
CRF1100 Africa Twin AS	$26,199	×
CRF1100 Africa Twin AS DCT	$27,199	×
CRF1100 Africa Twin AS DCT ES	$29,499	×
CRF300LRA Rally	$9199	✓
CB500XA	$9949	✓
CRF300LA	$7999	✓
AG-XR	$5399	✓

HUSQVARNA husqvarnamotorcycles.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Vitpilen 401	$7975	✓
Svartpilen 401	$7975	✓
FS450	$16,625	✓
701 Supermoto	$19,490	×
701 Enduro	$19,490	×
2022 TE 150i	$14,735	✓
2023 TE 150i	$14,959	✓
2022 TE 250i	$16,520	✓
2023 TE 250i	$16,789	✓
2022 TE 300i	$18,025	✓
2023 TE 300i	$18,379	✓
2022 FE 250	$16,520	✓
2023 FE 250	$16,789	✓
2022 FE 350	$17,610	✓
2023 FE 350	$17,929	✓
2022 FE 450	$18,025	✓
2023 FE 450	$18,269	✓
2022 FE 501	$18,655	✓
2023 FE 501	$18,929	✓
Norden 901	$25,050	×

INDIAN indianmotorcycle.com.au

All Indian prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Scout Bobber	$23,995	×
Scout Bobber Twenty	$24,495	×
Scout	$24,995	×
Scout Rogue	$25,995	×
Chief Dark Horse	$28,995	×
Chief Bobber Dark Horse	$30,495	×
Sport Chief	$32,995	×
Super Chief Limited	$32,995	×
Springfield Dark Horse	$38,995	×
Springfield	$39,495	×
Chieftain Dark Horse	$42,495	×
Chieftain Limited	$42,995	×
Challenger Dark Horse	$43,495	×
Challenger Limited	$43,995	×
Challenger Elite	$51,995	×
Roadmaster Dark Horse	$45,495	×
Roadmaster Limited	$45,995	×
Roadmaster Classic	$46,995	×
Pursuit Dark Horse	$46,995	×
Pursuit Limited	$47,495	×
FTR	$23,995	×
FTR Sport	$25,995	×
FTR Rally	$25,995	×
FTR R Carbon	$27,995	×

KAWASAKI kawasaki.com.au

Plus on-road costs

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Versys-X 300 SE	$7578	✓
Ninja 400 SE	$7713	✓
Ninja 400	$7413	✓
Z400	$7263	✓
Ninja 650L	$11,378	✓
Ninja 650	$11,378	×
Versys 650L	$12,178	✓
Z650L	$11,278	✓
Z650RS	$12,078	✓
W800 Cafe	$14,298	×

TESTED
VOL 72
NO 17

BIKE SPOTLIGHT

BMW K 1600 GT

ENGINE	Inline six-cylinder
POWER	118kW (60hp)
TORQUE	180Nm
WEIGHT	343kg (kerb)
PRICE	$45,600 (ride away)

> "Amazingly easy to chuck through corners. A bike this size has no right to handle this good"

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BUYER'S GUIDE. A-Z OF NEW BIKE PRICES

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
W800 Street	$13,898	✗
Z900 Supernaked	$13,528	✗
Z900RS	$16,778	✗
Ninja 1000SX	$17,878	✗
Versys 1000 S	$20,978	✗
Z1000	$16,978	✗
Ninja ZX-6R (636) KRT	$16,178	✗
Ninja H2	$38,379	✗
Ninja H2R	$67,299	✗
Ninja H2 SX	$32,379	✗
Ninja ZX-10R	$26,879	✗
Ninja ZX-10RR	$42,379	✗
Z H2	$24,140	✗
Ninja ZX-14R	$22,559	✗
Ninja ZX-14R SE	$23,239	✗
Vulcan S	$10,259	✗
Vulcan S LAMS	$10,439	✓
Kawasaki KLX150BF SE	$4629	✓
Kawasaki KLX230	$6329	✓
KLX230SM	$7494	✓
KLX250	$7294	✓
KLX450R	$11,329	✓
KLR650 ABS	$9394	✓
KLR650 ABS Adventure	$10,394	✓

KTM

ktm.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
200 Duke ABS	$5470	✓
390 Duke	$7885	✓
890 Duke	$16,850	✗
890 Duke GP	$17,120	✗
890 Duke R	$19,840	✗
690 SMC R	$19,295	✗
RC 390	$8399	✓
1290 Super Duke R	$29,420	✗
1290 Super Duke R EVO	$32,115	✗
1290 Super Duke GT	$33,165	✗
690 Enduro R	$19,295	✗
390 Adventure	$9970	✓
890 Adventure	$23,400	✗
890 Adventure R	$25,380	✗
1290 Super Adventure S	$31,710	✗
1290 Super Adventure R	$33,265	
2022 150 EXC	$14,175	✓
2023 150 EXC	$14,599	✓
2022 250 EXC	$15,900	✓
2023 250 EXC	$16,399	✓
2022 250 EXC-F	$15,900	✓
2023 250 EXC-F	$16,399	✓
2022 300 EXC TPI	$17,400	✓
2023 300 EXC TPI	$17,879	✓
2022 350 EXC-F	$16,985	✓
2023 350 EXC-F	$17,449	✓
2022 450 EXC-F	$17,300	✓
2023 450 EXC-F	$17,799	✓
2022 500 EXC-F	$17,925	✓
2023 500 EXC-F	$18,419	✓

KYMCO

kymco.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Agility 50	$2490	✓
Like 50 4T	$2890	✓
Agility RS 125 CBS	$2990	✓
Agility 16+ 125 (w/ top box)	$3490	✓
Agility 16+ 200i (w/ top box)	$4190	✓
People S 150 (w/ top box)	$5190	✓
Super 8 50 2T	$2790	✓
Like 125 CBS (w/ top box)	$3990	✓
Like 200i (w/ top box)	$3990	✓
Like 150R ABS (w/ top box)	$5290	✓
Like 150 S	$4790	✓
Agility 16+ 300	$6990	✓
Downtown 350i ABS	$8290	✓
DTX360	$8790	✓
Xciting S 400i ABS	$9990	✓
AK550 ABS	$13,490	✓

LAMBRETTA

lambrettaaustralia.com.au

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
V50 Special Flex	$3590	✓
V200 Special Flex	$4990	✓

MOTO GUZZI

motoguzzi.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
V7 Stone	$18,030	✗
V7 Stone Centenario	$19,030	✗
V7 Special	$18,930	✗
V9 Bobber Centenario	$19,330	✗
V85 TT	$22,230	✗
V85 TT Evocative	$22,830	✗
V85 TT Travel	$24,330	✗
V85 TT Centenario	$22,830	✗

MV AGUSTA

mvagusta.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
F3 800 Rosso	$36,990	✗
F3 800 RR	$41,990	✗
Brutale 800 Rosso	$29,990	✗
Brutale 800 RR	$34,990	✗
Brutale 1000 RS	$51,990	✗
Brutale 1000 RR	$63,990	✗
Rush 1000 (+race kit)	$76,880	✗
Dragster 800 Rosso	$32,990	✗
Dragster 800 RR SCS	$37,990	✗
Dragster 800 RC SCS	$41,990	✗
Superveloce 800	$42,990	✗
Superveloce 800 S	$48,990	✗
Superveloce 800 S (+race kit)	$51,590	✗
Turismo Veloce Rosso	$33,990	✗
Turismo Veloce Lusso SCS	$43,990	✗

PEUGEOT

peugeotmotorcycles.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Kisbee 50 2T	$2990	✓
Tweet 200	$5790	✓
Tweet 200 GT	$5990	✓
Django 50	$4190	✓
Django 150	$5490	✓
Belville 200 RS	$5990	✓
Metropolis 400	$14,790	✓

PIAGGIO

piaggio.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Typhoon 50	$4140	✓
Medley	$6540	✓
Medley S	$6640	✓
Beverly 400 S	$12,440	✓

RIEJU

rieju.com.au

Plus on-road costs

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
MR Ranger 200	$12,790	✓
MR Ranger 300	$12,990	✓
MR Racing 250	$13,990	✓
MR Racing 300	$14,290	✓
MR Pro 250	$15,690	✓
MR Pro 300	$15,990	✓

ROYAL ENFIELD

royalenfield.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Meteor 350 Fireball	$7890	✓
Meteor 350 Stellar	$8290	✓
Meteor 350 Supernova	$8690	✓
Hunter 350 Dapper	$7590	✓
Hunter 350 Rebel	$7690	✓
Classic 350 Halcyon	$7990	✓
Classic 350 Signals	$8290	✓
Classic 350 Dark	$8690	✓
Classic 350 Chrome	$8790	✓
Scram 411 Base	$8240	✓
Scram 411 Mid	$8340	✓
Scram 411 Premium	$8440	✓
Interceptor 650 Classic	$10,990	✓
Interceptor 650 Custom	$11,290	✓
Interceptor 650 Chrome	$11,590	✓
Continental GT 650 Classic	$10,990	✓
Continental GT 650 Custom	$11,290	✓
Continental GT 650 Chrome	$11,590	✓
Himalayan 410	$8390	✓
Super Meteor 650 Astra Black-Blue	$11,990	✓
Super Meteor 650 Interstellar Green	$12,190	✓
Super Meteor 650 Celestial Blue-Red	$11,290	✓

SHERCO

Sherco.com

Plus on-road costs

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
125 SE Factory	$13,499	✓
250 SE Factory	$14,999	✓
300 SE Factory	$15,499	✓
250 SEF Factory	$15,499	✓
300 SEF Factory	$15,999	✓
450 SEF Factory	$16,799	✓
500 SEF Factory	$16,999	✓

SUZUKI

suzukimotorcycles.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Address 110	$3890	✓
Avenis 125	$4890	✓
GSX-S125A	$5440	✓
V-Strom 250SX	$6480	✓
V-Strom 650XT	$14,990	✗
V-Strom 650XT LAMS	$14,990	✓
SV650	$11,490	✗
SV650 LAMS	$11,490	✓
GSX-S750	$14,390	✗
2023 GSX-R1000	$24,990	✗
2023 GSX-R1000R	$27,990	✗
GSX-S1000	$17,990	✗
GSX-S1000GT	$19,990	✗
Katana	$21,990	✗
V-Strom 1050DE	$24,690	✗
Hayabusa	$27,790	✗
Boulevard M109R	$21,990	✗
Trojan	$5990	✓
DR-Z400E	$11,390	✓
DR650SE	$10,390	✓

SUPER SOCO

supersoco.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
TC - Cafe	$5490	✓
TC Max (alloy wheels)	$7990	✓
TC Max (wire-spoke wheels)	$8290	✓
CUX Scooter	$4990	✓

K3 SV
BUBBLE
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SCAN ME
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MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
CUX Scooter - Ducati	$5490	✓
CPx Scooter	$7690	✓
CPx Scooter Dual Battery	$9990	✓

SWM

swmmotorcycles.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
RS 300 R	$8590	✓
RS 500 R	$9290	✓

SYM SCOOTA

symscooters.com.au

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Crox 50	$2490	✓
Mio 50i	$2890	✓
Classic 125	$2790	✓
Orbit 125	$2790	✓
Orbit II 125i	$3190	✓
Symphony ST 200i	$3990	✓
Classic 200i	$4090	✓
HD300i	$6690	✓
GTS300i Sport	$7690	✓

TRIUMPH

triumphmotorcycles.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Speed Twin 900	$16,190	×
Bonneville T100	$18,290	×
Scrambler 900	$18,590	×
Bonneville T120	$20,890	×
Speed Twin 1200	$21,090	×
Thruxton RS	$25,990	×
Bonneville Speedmaster	$22,490	×
Bonneville Bobber	$22,490	×
Scrambler 1200 XC	$23,450	×
Scrambler 1200 XE	$24,890	×
Rocket 3 R	$34,450	×
Rocket 3 GT	$35,850	×
Trident 660 LAMS	$13,150	✓
Street Triple S 660	$14,990	✓
Speed Triple 765 R	$18,140	×
Street Triple 765 RS	$20,590	×
Street Triple 765 Moto2 Edition	$25,290	×
Speed Triple 1200 RS	$28,490	×
Tiger 850 Sport	$18,250	×
Tiger 900 GT (and Low)	$21,250	×
Tiger 900 GT Pro	$24,250	×
Tiger 900 Rally	$22,390	×
Tiger 900 Rally Pro	$24,890	×
Tiger 1200 GT Pro	$29,990	×
Tiger 1200 Rally Pro	$31,800	×
Tiger 1200 GT Explorer	$32,600	×
Tiger 1200 Rally Explorer	$33,950	×

URAL

ural.com

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
CT	$25,299	×
Gear Up	$28,599	×
Sportsman SE	$30,599	×
Sahara SE	$30,599	×

VESPA

vespa.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
Primavera 50	$6490	✓
Primavera 125 i-Get	$7690	✓
Primavera 150 i-Get	$8490	✓
Primavera 150 S	$8590	✓
Primavera 150 Red	$8990	✓
Primavera 150 SE Picnic	$9040	✓
Primavera 150 75 Anno	$9890	✓
Sprint i-Get	$8590	✓
GTS 150 i-Get	$9590	✓
GTS 300 Super Sport	$12,290	✓
GTS 300 Super Tech	$12,890	✓
GTV 300 'Sei Giorni'	$12,590	✓
GTS 300 75 Anno	$13,590	✓

YAMAHA

yamaha-motor.com.au

All prices are ride away

MODEL	PRICE $AUD	LAMS
D'elight 125 White	$3849	✓
NMAX 155	$5899	✓
XMAX 300	$9149	✓
TMAX 560	$19,849	✓
XV250 Virago	$8849	✓
YZF-R15	$4999	✓
MT-03	$7849	✓
YZF-R3	$8199	✓
MT-07 LAMS	$12,749	✓
MT-07 HO	$13,599	×
XSR700	$13,699	✓
MT-09	$15,699	×
MT-09 SP	$18,099	×
XSR900	$17,299	×
Tracer 9 GT	$23,999	×
Niken GT	$28,199	×
MT-10	$23,649	×
MT-10 SP	$27,349	×
FJR1300	$32,649	×
YZF-R6 (Race only)	$19,049	×
YZF-R7 LAMS	$14,049	✓
YZF-R7 HO	$15,049	×
YZF-R1	$28,199	×
YZF-R1M	$37,099	×
WR250F	$14,949	✓
WR450F	$16,549	✓
Tenere 700	$19,399	×
Super Tenere	$25,949	×

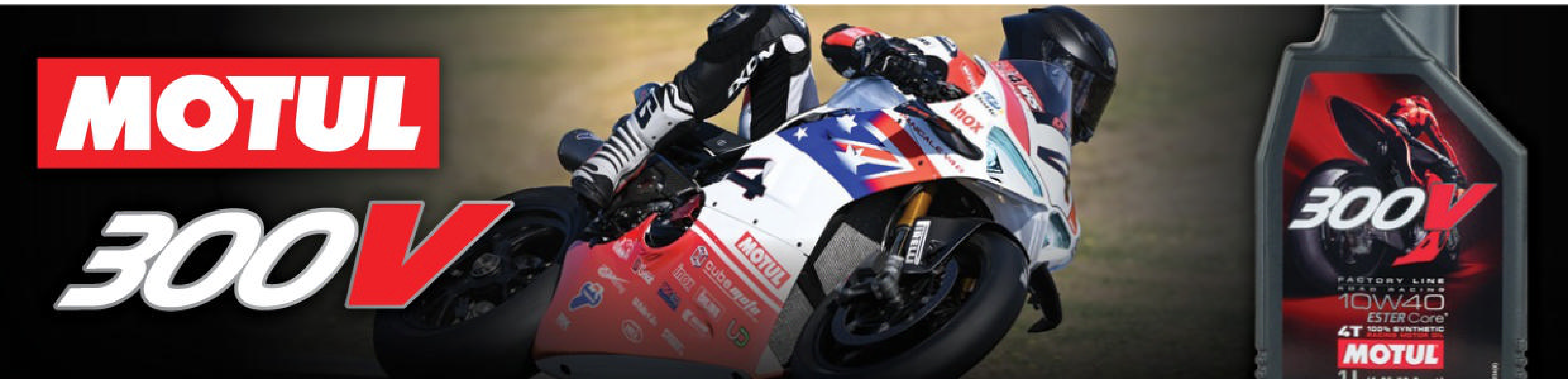
TESTED
VOL 72
NO 15

BIKE SPOTLIGHT

SUZUKI
DR-Z400E

ENGINE	398cc single-cylinder
POWER	29kW (39.4hp)
TORQUE	Not given
WEIGHT	140kg (kerb)
PRICE	$11,390 (ride away)

> "The DR-Z is a machine that can do it all. A cliche maybe, but I reckon it's absolutely true in this case"



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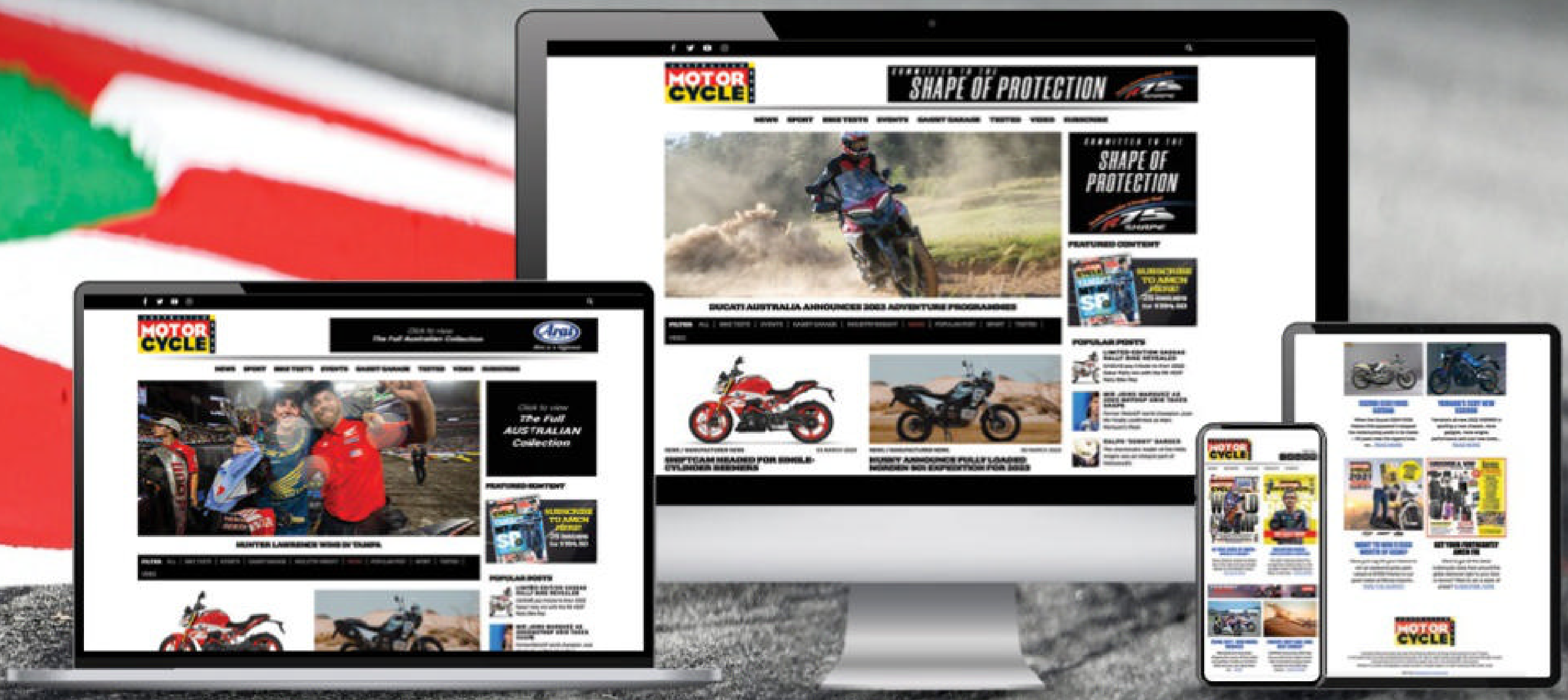
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OLD SCHOOL. WITH HAMISH COOPER

> “IT GOT ME THINKING ABOUT THE TWO NATIONS AND WHAT KIWIS CALL ‘THE BACK COUNTRY’ AND AUSSIES CALL ‘THE OUTBACK’”

I’D JUST returned from a week or so riding in a big loop around New Zealand’s South Island to hear the news that the Voice to Parliament referendum had finally been launched. It got me thinking about the two nations and what Kiwis call “the Back Country” and Aussies call “the Outback”. Both are experienced best from the vantage point of a motorcycle. Both are similar, but different.

New Zealand’s Southern Alps, with its snow-capped peaks (even at the height of summer) and its “braided rivers” that are fed by pre-historic glaciers, dominate the skyline. The time I was there torrential rain on the West Coast temporarily closed the tourist route to Franz Joseph Glacier. Yet the foothills and plains to the east of the glacier were bathed in 25-28°C sunlight.

The landscape in the South Island is epic, as is the Australian Outback. The difference is that the Outback is dominated by a vast sky that really comes alive at night. During the day the sweeping, often flat vista can threaten to look monotonous until you search for the subtleties of the landscape. There are mound springs that look like an anthill until you are on top of them. Trees lining rocky creek beds indicate water is flowing underground.

Get off the bike and look more closely under the guidance of a local indigenous person and you learn that the bushes and grasses can sustain a person, along with careful harvesting of lizard eggs. It’s a pity Burke and Wills, the first Europeans to cross our continent south to north, didn’t seek out local advice on their ill-fated expedition.

Most Australians regard an Outback trip as something to tick off on their bucket list. But the magic makes many return again, and again. Most often they travel encased in the air-conditioned comfort of a 4WD. But the best way to become part of the landscape is on a motorcycle. You can feel the chill of the morning turn into the heat of the day. You can feel the change in air pressure as a cold front sweeps in.

The vastness and calmness of the Outback can have a healing effect.

Daryl Beattie, who was forced into retirement from grand prix racing at age 27, has explained this in several AMCN guest columns we’ve run in our annual adventure issue. Here are some of his thoughts gathered up over nearly 10 years of running his tour company:

“After a couple of years of mental adjustment I realised I could combine my love of the Outback with motorcycling.

“I will never grow tired of the freedom, wide open spaces, learning about the ancient cultures of these places and the true grit of the early settlers.

“I don’t regard myself as a particularly spiritual person but I certainly feel something special when I’m out in the ultimate remoteness of the Outback.

“It all came home to me on a trip on the Madigan Line in the Simpson Desert. I climbed a huge sand dune and watched our tour group ride through the spinifex and out of sight. I sat there until I couldn’t hear the bikes anymore and there was just that unique silence of the Outback. I thought to myself, ‘Wow, this is why I do it.’

“You sit around the campfire at night thinking about the thousands of years of life that has existed in a vast area that people who live in the city think is empty.”

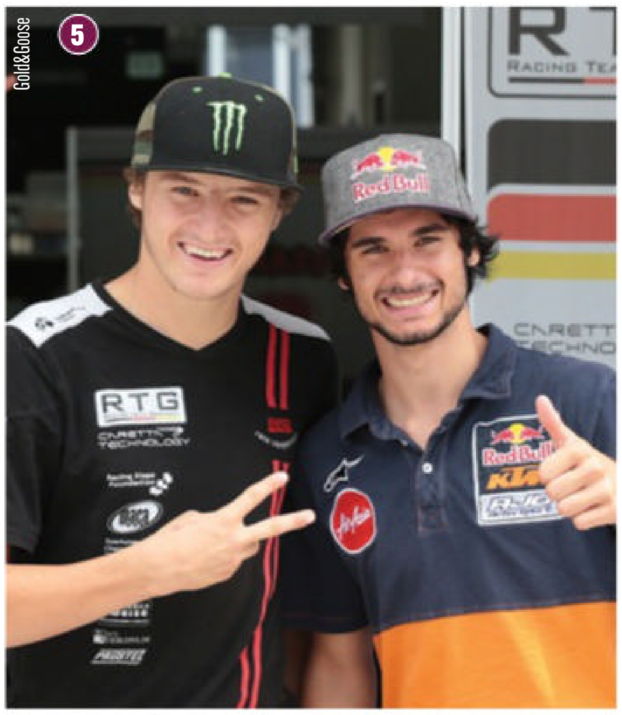
The land that sustained the life of its earliest inhabitants was simply taken off them by early colonists. However, many of these descendants farming now don’t realise they only own the top few metres and could lose the rest to a mining development.

The Voice to Parliament is considered by its proponents to be the start of addressing issues that date back to the start of European settlement. Since Federation there have been 19 referendums proposing 44 changes to the Constitution. Only eight changes have been approved.

What will the little voice inside tell you to do when it comes time to vote?

Photography: Rob Mott

Gold&Goose



1. Sissis at the 2023 ASBK opener, where he finished seventh overall

2. It's a team effort to move towards the sharp end, and Sissis has it in spades

3. Switching from Suzuki to Yamaha two years ago has proven to be a masterstroke

4. Fast starter: Sissis gets the ASBK holeshot at Phillip Island

5. Jack Miller and Sissis during their Moto3 days

REVOLVING RACER. WITH ARTHUR SISSIS

"IT'S GREAT TO BE FINALLY DICING WITH THE GREATS OF ASBK – IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME COMING"

PHILLIP ISLAND was a pretty wild time for me and the Unitech Superbike team. Thankfully, it ended very well thanks to their hard work. At one point we had electronic problems with both of our bikes, and were unsure whether we would walk away with any points at all. To fix all those problems and pull it out of the fire to finish sixth has been a big boost to my confidence and the team's momentum heading into the next ASBK round in Sydney.

It's great to be finally dicing with the greats of ASBK – it's been a long time coming. The biggest pivot was switching from the Suzuki to the Yamaha two years ago. It was a decision I made based on the ergonomics of the Yamaha. I'm not the biggest bloke in the world and the Suzuki is on the rangy side, which made it hard for me to muscle it around. The Yamaha is much more compact and I've been able to slowly get it the way I want, allowing me to drop my lap times significantly.

A big part of that process was Mal Pitman and Scott Heyes, who customised the bike to suit me. They worked on finding the best balance between swingarm angle and chain angle, fork damping rate, ride height and body position. Mal's experience in local and international racing is unsurpassed. There's not a lot he doesn't know about racing at the elite level. Scott has had a lot of success in national racing as an engine builder, and has a lot of knowledge in suspension, bike dynamics, riding styles, race craft and sports psychology. He reckons my body position has changed as I've gotten faster. It's not a conscious thing, just an instinctive thing, I guess.

The Unitech team is owned by Simon Siounis of Picture Me Rollin Motorcycle Accessory Emporium as well as Shogai Imports and Pete and Donna Hoeymakers from Hoey Racing Motor Cycle Enginering. Their support, as well as backing riders in the 300 and 600 classes, has been phenomenal. National racing requires passionate, invested people, and the Unitech team is a great example of that. Its commitment to the sport is amazing. With that support in place, Mal turned our Superbike crew into a MotoGP outfit, which has been key in competing with the factory teams.

My other sponsors include Remo Contractors, SA Profiling, AusCrush & Recycle, and Anthony Gorle of Unitech Building Services. Yamaha has also been very supportive of our effort.

With that infrastructure in place comes my development as a Superbike rider. It's an ever-evolving thing. The closer you get to the front and see how the top riders operate, the more tools you need to run with them and beat them. They all have their own ways to make life hard for you; they don't like you passing them. They've seen plenty of riders come and go, they know every trick in the book. It's about understanding their tactics and coming up with plans to deal with them. It's a great place to be in and I'm loving the challenge. As part of that, I'm working very hard on my fitness.

As a team we're all proud South Australians, and The Bend is obviously my home track. I spend a lot of time there, and Scott, who's a Queenslander, reckons it suits my style. A huge turning point was finishing third overall there at round seven of the 2022 ASBK championship. I was up at the pointy end for the first time in a long time. I also got fourth at Phillip Island. Both were massive for my self-belief and feeling comfortable at that pace. Several years ago, we were seconds away from the front-runners. Now we're talking tenths. The challenge this year is to keep improving myself and the bike, and be competitive at every track.

It's almost 10 years since I left Europe, when I lived with Jack Miller. It's been great seeing him win races, drink the best champagne from his Dainese boot, and finally get married! I wish my old mate all the best in 2023.

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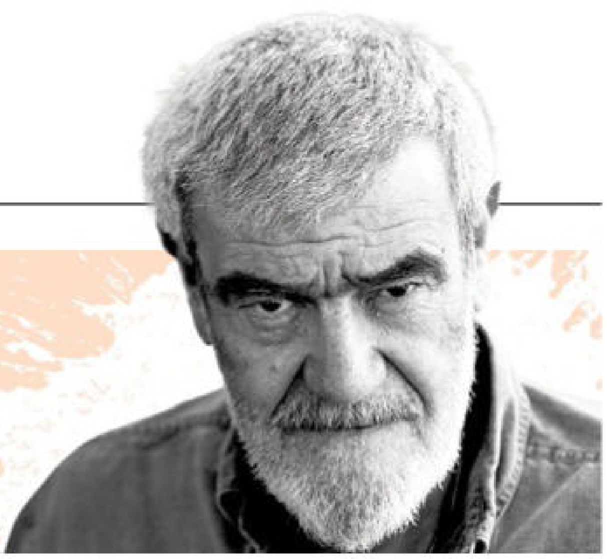
IN PIT LANE. WITH MICHAEL SCOTT



"IT'S STILL ALL GUESSWORK FOR THE 2023 SEASON. BUT HERE ARE 13 QUESTIONS THAT WILL NEED TO BE ANSWERED"

CAN MARQUEZ win again?

Time waits for no man; genius will not be denied. Can Marc Marquez, 30 this year, find the motivation to resist the same tide of youth that eventually did for Rossi. I'd guess yes.

Is Joan Mir the teammate to challenge the master?

Dominant in Moto3, impressive in Moto2, champion in MotoGP… in 2020, with just one win, and none since – outshone by Suzuki teammate Alex Rins. Repsol Honda team guru Alberto Puig chose Mir over Rins. Plenty to prove.

Can Honda reverse the slump?

New tech staff – including ex-Suzuki guru Ken Kawauchi; new evolution, including catch-up ground-effect aero… HRC will be stronger this year than last. Trouble is, the rivals have had three years of their own continuous improvement.

Will Saturday sprint races upset the championship/bring back the crowds?

Yes to the former, maybe not to the latter. A half-length half-points sprint on Saturday afternoon adds to the show, but the format favours risk-takers over tactical tyre-preservers, with injuries a haunting possibility.

Are 21 races too many?

Formula 1 has 23 this season, plus six sprint races. But counting the sprints MotoGP has 42. Some riders thought that last year's 20 imposed too much stress and travel fatigue. Others (step forward Jack Miller) would be happy to have even more.

Has Yamaha got its sums right this time?

The biggest anomaly last year was Fabio Quartararo's prowess on a sub-standard bike that three other riders found disastrous. Some of the missing speed has been restored. Will it be enough?

Does Ducati have too many fast riders?

Definitely. Pecco Bagnaia's home-town headache is new teammate Enea Bastianini, who beat him four times last year. Plus superfast Pramac rider Jorge Martin, rising star Luca Marini, veteran Johann Zarco (long overdue a race win) and a precocious Marco Bezzecchi.

Can Bagnaia beat Quartararo?

Or vice versa? They're fine adversaries. Bagnaia had a flawed early 2022, but found focus at the end. Quartararo seldom faltered, while over-riding an outclassed bike. Want to find out more? Wait and see…

Should Suzuki come back?

Well of course it should. It shouldn't have left in the first place. With the least resources, it had developed an elegant MotoGP bike that could win without having to challenge on horsepower or budget.

Will Miller teach KTM some Ducati tricks?

The Aussie brings five years steeped in Ducati know-how to KTM. Jack's gung-ho manner might belie his technical nous, and he could have some important lessons for the Austrians. If not, he'll be disappointed by his new bike.

Is it Brad Binder's time?

Binder has the same ability as Marquez and Quartararo to impose willpower over technical weakness. He won two unlikely races for KTM, was sixth last year – one point behind Miller, and reliably far exceeded grid positions on race day (18th to eighth at Le Mans). The KTM is not an easy bike. If they've changed that for 2023, watch him go.

Will MotoGP climb onto the GenZ market?

Netflix recruited huge numbers of new young fans first to F1 with *Drive to Survive*, and has added tennis and golf to the portfolio. By contrast, Amazon's *MotoGP Unlimited* was a lame documentary, sinking almost without trace. Will a second attempt do better?

Has Aprilia grown up enough?

Will Aleix Espargaro (now the oldest rider) have grown up too much? Will Maverick Vinales settle to be his best self? And will Miguel Oliveira beat them both? The former underdogs took a great leap forward last year, but silly mistakes spoiled the end result. One year later, things might be different.

ROUND 02 MANDALIKA - 3-5 MARCH // 2023 WORLDSBK CHAMPIONSHIP

WSBK

LINE IN THE SAND

The racing was fast, frenetic and unpredictable behind you-know-who as the WorldSBK racers took on their second seaside circuit

REPORT **GORDON RITCHIE** + PHOTOGRAPHY **GOLD&GOOSE**

THE SLIPPERY Indonesian track's surface, even tricky on the racing line at times, didn't stop a weekend of drama, unlikely outcomes and tales of the very much expected. Like Alvaro Bautista (Aruba Ducati) being almost completely dominant again, the Kawasakis not making a miracle one-weekend turnaround after Phillip Island's reversals, or front tyre wear rates determining almost everybody's eventual race outcomes.

But, again, as Superpole qualifying outlined, you can only keep a talent like Toprak Razgatlioglu and his Pata Yamaha YZF-R1 down for so long before he battles back. On Saturday, all that push and talent was translated to Superpole, his second pole position in as many weeks saw him just edge out his teammate, and there would be a very similar story in the first 22-lap race.

Unfortunately for Razgatlioglu his triumph over teammate Andrea Locatelli was only for second place in Race 1, as way out front Bautista was untouchable. The Spaniard took only until lap five to pass Razgatlioglu, and from then on in it was a gap-holding operation, eventually slowing up to win by 4.809sec.

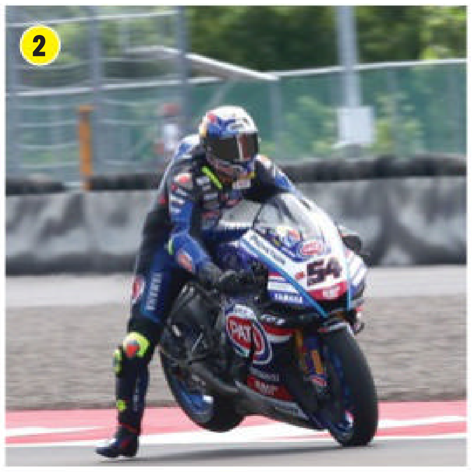
Bautista even got to use a statement tyre option, with an SC1 front and an SCX-A (the development 800, as it is technically) on the back. His teammate Michael Ruben Rinaldi ran the same tyre choices, but he fell after lunging too hard on the brakes into Turn 1, hitting Axel Bassani's Motocorsa Ducati and causing several moments for the following pack.

The leading three would eventually drop some fast early competitors, in the shape of Bassani and a slightly recovering Jonathan Rea (Kawasaki Racing Team).

Suffering from gastroenteritis, Rea was not quite himself, but his bike was way off again. He went from thinking he could fight with Locatelli and Razgatlioglu to being picked off by everyone down to his eventual ninth-place finish. He was just ahead of his teammate and fellow front tyre toiler, Alex Lowes, but his final pass on Lowes also allowed Dominique Aegerter (GRT Yamaha) to get by them both. Lowes was slightly miffed, of course. Bassani would eventually be fourth and Danilo Petrucci a best-yet fifth on his Barni Spark Racing Ducati.

Michael van der Mark (ROKit BMW) was positively beaming, but a strong sixth place would do that to a man who has been starved of results for so long. Xavi Vierge (HRC) and Aegerter were the final Rea and Lowes tormentors, in seventh and eighth places respectively.

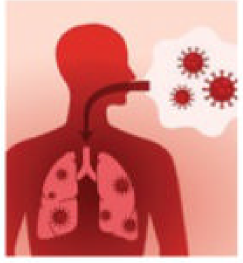
The Superpole Race was halted by a crash that Petrucci said that Lowes started, and vice versa. Petrucci didn't fall, but suffered a damaged



> YOU CAN ONLY KEEP A TALENT LIKE TOPRAK RAZGATLIOGLU AND HIS PATA YAMAHA YZF-R1 DOWN FOR SO LONG

INCONSISTENCIES OF THE WEEKEND

There were several decisions on the weekend that bemused observers. Nicolo Bulega and Glenn van Straalen tangled in WorldSSP. Most thought Bulega at fault when van Straalen fell, but there was no punishment. Axel Bassani had to drop one position for a pass that Rea and Razgatlioglu did on each other twice during each race in 2022.



VIRAL BUG OF THE WEEKEND

It felt like half the paddock went to various stages of illness with varying levels of gastroenteritis over the Mandalika weekend. Half the paddock had heavy coughs in Australia the week before, but there was a bugger of a bug flying about in Indonesia, with big names like Jonathan Rea, Tom Sykes and Remy Gardner affected.

5
DIABLO
PIRELLI

1. A crash for Bautista in the Sprint, but he scooped the big points on offer elsewhere

2. Razgatlioglu revelled back at his favourite circuit

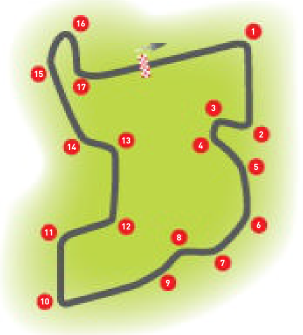
3. The Race 1 podium: (L to R) Razgatlioglu, Bautista and Locatelli

4. Gardner showed all class on Sunday after sitting out Saturday

5. Rinaldi crashes in Race 1

6. Rea and Toprak lock horns

WorldSBK Round 2 results and standings



Mandalika, Indonesia **4.3km**

2022 Winners

WorldSBK R1 **T Razgatlioglu**
WorldSBK SP Race **T Razgatlioglu**
WorldSBK R2 **T Razgatlioglu**
WorldSSP R1 **N Tuuli**
WorldSSP R2 **D Aegerter**

WorldSBK Race 1

POS	RIDER	NAT	BIKE	TIME
1	A BAUTISTA	SPA	DUC	32m44.093s
2	T RAZGATLIOGLU	TUR	YAM	+4.809s
3	A LOCATELLI	ITA	YAM	+6.586s
4	A BASSANI	ITA	DUC	+8.871s
5	D PETRUCCI	ITA	DUC	+11.667s
6	M VAN DER MARK	NED	BMW	+12.685s
7	X VIERGE	SPA	HON	+13.610s
8	D AEGERTER	SUI	YAM	+13.961s
9	J REA	GBR	KAW	+14.454s
10	A LOWES	GBR	KAW	+14.590s
11	L BAZ	FRA	BMW	+16.431s
12	I LECUONA	SPA	HON	+16.793s
13	P OETTL	GER	DUC	+26.167s
14	G GERLOFF	USA	BMW	+30.580s
15	L BALDASSARRI	ITA	YAM	+35.520s
16	H SYAHRIN	MAS	HON	+1m02.195s
17	O KONIG	CZE	KAW	+1m09.875s
18	T SYKES	GBR	KAW	+4 LAPS

DNS: R GARDNER (AUS, YAM), **DNF:** S REDDING (GBR, BMW), M RINALDI (ITA, DUC)

POLE POSITION

RAZGATLIOGLU 1m32.037s

FASTEST LAP

BAUTISTA 1m32.803s

WorldSBK Superpole Race

POS	RIDER	NAT	BIKE	TIME
1	T RAZGATLIOGLU	TUR	YAM	12m26.052s
2	A LOCATELLI	ITA	YAM	+1.110s
3	A LOWES	GBR	KAW	+1.372s
4	J REA	GBR	KAW	+3.073s
5	A BASSANI	ITA	DUC	+3.324s
6	X VIERGE	SPA	HON	+4.251s
7	M RINALDI	ITA	DUC	+4.617s
5	D PETRUCCI	ITA	DUC	+11.667s
8	M VAN DER MARK	NED	BMW	+4.792s
9	S REDDING	GBR	BMW	+5.797s

FASTEST LAP

REA1m32.225s

WorldSBK Race 2

POS	RIDER	NAT	BIKE	TIME
1	A BAUTISTA	ESP	DUC	21m43.781s
2	T RAZGATLIOGLU	TUR	YAM	+1.218s
3	X VIERGE	SPA	HON	+1.832s
4	M RINALDI	ITA	DUC	+4.068s
5	A LOCATELLI	ITA	YAM	+4,848s
6	D PETRUCCI	ITA	DUC	+5.838s
7	R GARDNER	AUS	YAM	+6.339s
8	A BASSANI	ITA	DUC	+6.796s
9	I LECUONA	ESP	HON	+9.095s
10	S REDDING	GBR	BMW	+9.659s
11	G GERLOFF	USA	BMW	+9.832s
12	D AEGERTER	SUI	YAM	+11.264s
13	A LOWES	GBR	KAW	+15.167s
14	L BALDASSARRI	ITA	YAM	+15.663s
15	H SYAHRIN	MAS	HON	+21.798s

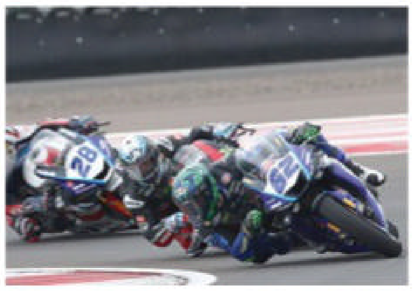
DNS: L BAZ (FRA, BMW), **DNF:** J REA (GBR, KAW), T SYKES (GBR, KAW), M VAN DER MARK (NED, BMW), P OETTL (GER, DUC), O KONIG (CZE, KAW)

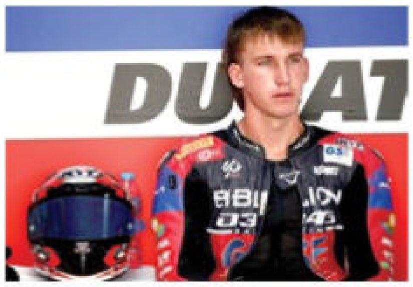
FASTEST LAP

BAUTISTA 1m32.647s

RIDER STANDINGS AFTER 2 OF 12 ROUNDS

1 BAUTISTA 112, 2 RAZGATLIOGLU 75, 3 LOCATELLI 70 4 BASSANI 51, 5 RINALDI 47, 6 REA 44, 7 VIERGE 43, 8 PETRUCCI 36, 9 LECUONA 33, 10 AEGERTER 24, 11 OETTL 23, 12 LOWES 22, 13 GARDNER 19, 14 REDDING 17, 15 VAN DER MARK 16.





WorldSSP Race 1

POS	RIDER	NAT	BIKE	TIME
1	C ONCU	TUR	KAW	28m56.637s
2	F CARICASULO	ITA	DUC	+3.300s
3	N TUULI	FIN	TRI	+4.172s
4	M SCHROETTER	GER	MVA	+7.813s
5	N BULEGA	ITA	DUC	+11.558s
6	V DEBISE	FRA	YAM	+20.218s
7	S MANZI	ITA	YAM	+35.418s
8	O BAYLISS	AUS	DUC	+39.987s
9	B SOFUOGLU	TUR	MVA	+41.431s
10	J MCPHEE	GBR	KAW	+42.621s
11	G VAN STRAALEN	NED	YAM	+46.092s
12	J NAVARRO	ESP	YAM	+46.595s
13	A SARMOON	THA	YAM	+54.197s
14	T MACKENZIE	GBR	HON	+56.861s
15	A NORRODIN	MAS	HON	+1m16.156s
16	T ALBERTO	PHI	KAW	+1m27.344s
17	H TRUELOVE	GBR	TRI	+1m27.819s

DNF: R DE ROSA (ITA, DUC), N SPINELLI (ITA, YAM), A WONGTHANANON (THA, YAM) **DSQ**: A MANTOVANI (ITA, YAM)

POLE POSITION AND NEW BEST LAP

BULEGA 1m35.520s

FASTEST LAP AND NEW RECORD

ONCU 1m35.728s

WorldSSP Race 2

POS	RIDER	NAT	BIKE	TIME
1	F CARICASULO	ITA	DUC	28m54.981s
2	S MANZI	ITA	YAM	+0.325s
3	N BULEGA	ITA	DUC	+1.546s
4	C ONCU	TUR	KAW	+3.148s
5	M SCHROETTER	GER	MVA	+6.199s
6	N TUULI	FIN	TRI	+8.453s
7	R DE ROSA	ITA	DUC	+10.365s
8	J NAVARRO	ESP	YAM	+18.320s
9	N SPINELLI	ITA	YAM	+22.487s
10	B SOFUOGLU	TUR	MVA	+28.997s
11	J MCPHEE	GBR	KAW	+29.469s
12	O BAYLISS	AUS	DUC	+37.142s
13	A NORRODIN	MAS	HON	+53.175s
14	T MACKENZIE	GBR	HON	+53.377s
15	A SARMOON	THA	YAM	+53.663s
16	H TRUELOVE	GBR	TRI	+55.175s
17	A MANTOVANI	ITA	YAM	+1.04.761s
18	T ALBERTO	PHI	KAW	+1m27.057s

DNF: V DEBISE (FRA, YAM), G VAN STRAALEN (NED, YAM), A WONGTHANANON (THA, YAM))

FASTEST LAP AND NEW RECORD

MANZI 1m35.416s

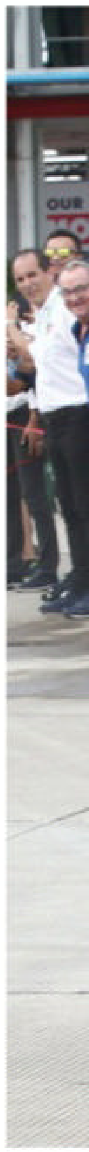
RIDER STANDINGS AFTER 2 OF 12 ROUNDS

1 BULEGA 77, 2 MANZI 59, 3 ONCU 54, 4 CARICASULO 51, 5 TULLI 46, 6 SCHROETTER 46, 7 MCPHEE 31, 8 NAVARRO 29, 9 SPINELLI 27, 10 DEBISE 21, 11 VAN STRAALEN 18, 12 DE ROSA 18, 13 BAYLISS 18, 14 SOFUOGLU 18, 15 MACKENZIE 15.

WSBK

1. Gardner rode out of his skin on the Yamaha **2.** Rea after dropping his Kawasaki in Race 2 **3.** The Lowes-Baz Superpole Race bingle **4.** Race 2 podium: (L to R) Razgatlioglu, Bautista and Vierge **5.** A major breakthrough for Honda and Vierge **6.** Par for the Toprak course...

THE FINAL INDONESIAN RACE WAS A REAL BREAKTHROUGH FOR VIERGE WHO SECURED HIS FIRST WORLDSBK PODIUM



exhaust, while both Lowes and Loris Baz (Bonovo Action BMW) fell, with Lowes' bike so smashed he was allowed to race a spare one in what was a complete new Superpole race – albeit over only eight laps, not the regular 10. Rea would crash soon after, and the red flags came out as there was evidently fluid of some kind on the track.

Another collision in that restarted race between Baz and Lowes took place when Lowes was attempting a pass on the tall Frenchman. Lowes went inside into the braking zone of Turn 10, but just as he made his move Baz performed a leg dangle to help in his braking and Lowes' bike hit his leg so hard it broke bones. Baz did not fall, but rode gingerly back to the pits, where he had to be lifted off his bike and taken to the medical centre.

A short time later Rea passed Bautista for second place behind the fleeing Razgatlioglu, the eventual deserved race winner. As he did so, both Rea and Bautista ended up off line on the slippery stuff. Bautista lost the rear as he accelerated, falling without injury but no-scoring – a surprise after his four wins in succession, but anybody could fall at Mandalika this weekend, and many did.

Rea also came close to a crash, spinning up, snapping sideways, and his recovery allowed both eventual second-place rider Locatelli and third-place finisher Lowes through.

Rea was fourth, Bassani fifth and Spaniard Vierge a strong sixth, just over 4.2sec down on the winner.

In the second 22-lap race of the weekend, Bautista got back to the business of winning and, as it turned out, he didn't need to wait 22 laps to do it either. Van der Mark highsided spectacularly from his BMW, and fractured a finger, but he had a lucky escape, especially after suffering so many bad injuries last season.

The following Philipp Öttl (Go Eleven Ducati) could not avoid the stricken BWM and crashed into it at speed. With debris all over the track, the race was red flagged.

The 14-lap restart saw Rinaldi making up for all his misfortune to lead. For a long time but not all time, because his dominant teammate Bautista closed in for the final glory. He was saved any

Landscape Gardner

WSBK DNS, 14th, 7th

AFTER A STRONG Friday, inside the top six, Remy Gardner (GYTR GRT Yamaha WorldSBK) did not even get to ride on Saturday after being struck down with gastroenteritis. He came back on Sunday for 14th in the Superpole Race and then an amazing seventh, from the back of the grid each time, after missing Superpole.

"Friday was good. In the afternoon we focused on race pace, and it wasn't bad, but the track is pretty complicated and we are going through front tyres like there is no tomorrow. Alvaro crashed right in front of me when I came out of the box. If you go off line you had better be picking the bike up.

"Honestly, I wasn't sure I could race on Sunday, but we made it. We tried our best in the Superpole race, managing to recover eight positions.

"Afterwards, in Race 2, we also showed great speed, starting once again from last position on the grid."

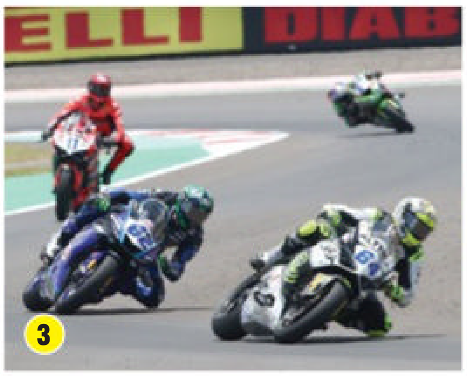
arduous last-corner antics when Rinaldi missed his braking marker after Bautista passed him and ran straight on – the best he could salvage was fourth.

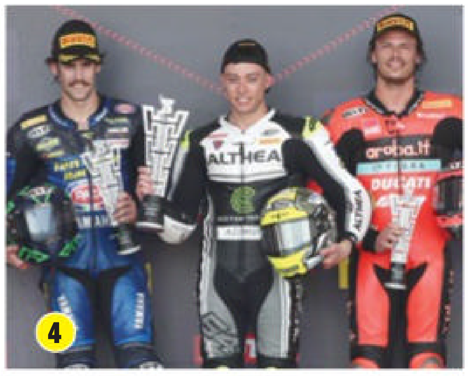
Even though Razgatlioglu finished second, the final Indonesian race was a real breakthrough for Vierge, who secured his first WorldSBK podium thanks to determination and desire as much as anything else. He was aided by the fact that Rea's horrible weekend ended up with him crashing, gouging a bit out of the inside of his right thigh in the process. Locatelli was fifth and Petrucci, the best independent rider, in sixth.

In the points, Bautista has 112 to Razgatlioglu's 75. Locatelli has 70, Bassani 51 and Rinaldi 47.

There is a long wait until WorldSBK action gets going again, at the classic Assen circuit in the Netherlands, with race weekend taking place over 21-23 April.

1. Caricasulo and Tuuli in close company **2.** Oncu's first WorldSSP victory, and even Toprak got in on the celebrations! **3.** Caricasulo and Manzi in Race 2 **4.** And the Race 2 top three: (L to R) Manzi, Caricasulo and polesitter, Bulega





FOUR AND TWO

FOUR- AND twin-cylinder motorcycles won a race apiece at Mandalika, across two very different days of racing and weather conditions.

Can Öncü (Kawasaki Puccetti) had to wait until his 65th WorldSSP race to take his first win, but he made the most of his opportunity in Race 1.

Braver than most in the early slightly-wet laps while running slick tyres, he took a quickly extended lead, and eased out to finish 3.305sec ahead of the next best rider, Italian Federico Caricasulo on the Althea Ducati.

Caricasulo had to fight the determined Niki Tuuli (Dynavolt Triumph) tooth and nail for second place. With Marcel Schrötter (MV Agusta Reparto Corse) fourth, that made it four different bikes in the top four places. The leading Yamaha - Valetin Debise and his GMT94 R6 - was back in sixth place.

In Race 2, in fully dry and significantly warmer conditions, Caricasulo took the spoils. Not quite another first-time winner, but he hadn't won a race since 2019 so it felt like a novelty at least. He overhauled the seemingly invincible Stefano Manzi (Ten Kate Yamaha) at great pace on the final lap, with plenty of tyre and determination to spare.

Third was Nicolo Bulega (Aruba Ducati), who looked a nailed-on winner at times this weekend, but had to settle for third, although only 1.546sec down. Öncü had led from the front but 18 hot laps were too much for his bike set-up.

In the championship points, after four races, Bulega has 77, Manzi 59, Öncü 54, Caricasulo 51 and Tuuli 46. With Schrötter sixth, there are five different bikes in the top six places.

Boy Bayliss

WorldSSP 8th, 12th

OLI BAYLISS (D34G Ducati) was 15th in Superpole, but come the first race, which went the distance despite a rain shower at the very start, the Aussie moved up to eighth at the flag. In Race 2 he finished 12th.

"We struggled a little bit in qualifying here, just to get a good feeling on the bike and for me to put a good lap together. When we arrived at Turn 1 I kind of got sandwiched in between a couple of other riders and I think we went a little bit further back than where we started from.

"I put my head down and made a few positions early on, and got into a little bit of a groove. A few other riders crashed and that definitely helped our result a little bit. In Race 2, we decided to go another step in the direction that we took in the first race and we were a lot more consistent but missed the initial pace. I had a problem on the second lap with a fairing interfering with my gear shifter which lasted for the rest of the race."

MOTOGP

RED ALERT

Final preseason test points to a Ducati whitewash

REPORT **NEIL MORRISON** + PHOTOGRAPHY **GOLD&GOOSE**

AT THE close of preseason testing for 2023 one name and one name alone rang out. Francesco Bagnaia (Lenovo Ducati) is the man the current MotoGP grid fears after he convincingly topped the two-day outing at the Algarve International Circuit in Portugal thanks to a new best lap of 1m37.968s.

Bagnaia was one of eight reasons why this was a near-flawless preseason for Ducati, the current triple crown holder. He declared himself “100 percent prepared” for the opening round, and already appears fully at home aboard the improved GP23. His two 12-lap sprint simulations on the final day were testament to that, with few others capable of matching his explosive early speed.

But there were hints that 2023 won’t simply be a Ducati whitewash. Aprilia had another strong showing, its RS-GP clearly the second best bike on the grid. The final day saw crucial improvements for the previously frustrated Fabio Quartararo (Monster Energy Yamaha), the only non-Ducati rider in the top eight in third place. Likewise, Brad Binder (Red Bull KTM) and Marc Marquez (Repsol Honda) – ninth and 14th respectively – gave indications they can drag their respective factories into the mix.

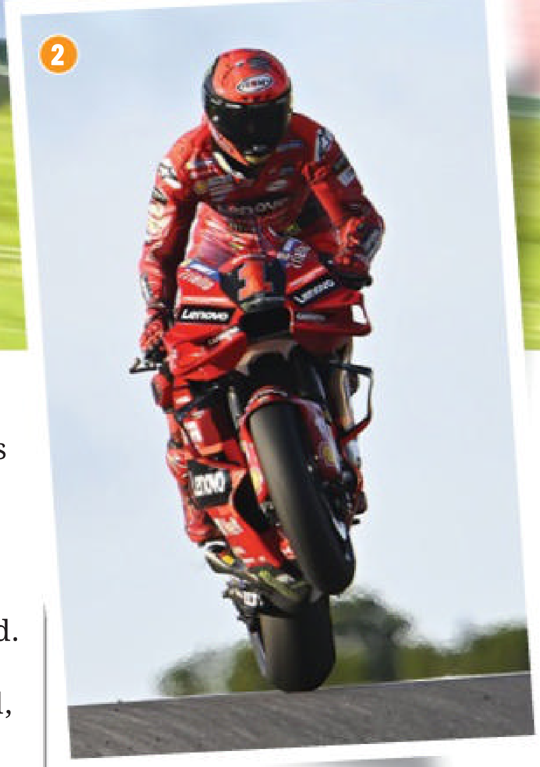
DUCATI

That the only negative of the weekend was Fabio Di Giannantonio (Gresini Ducati) missing day two due to concussion sustained on Saturday tells its own story. That misfortune aside, Ducati is the manufacturer entering a season in the strongest shape since Honda in 2003. Each of the seven other riders demonstrated they could be in the running for a podium finish at the opening round. All were in the top eight, too, with five under the lap record.

After steady development work, the GP23 is up to speed, with Bagnaia feeling slight improvements across the board for the Ducati.

“Every part we tested and everything we moved in terms of setting, in terms of development was good, so we improved.”

Even Enea Bastianini – plagued by reliability issues on day one, which resulted in a loss of confidence – came good on Sunday, with his sprint simulation showing he isn’t a million miles off his teammate. It wouldn’t be a surprise to see a Ducati lock out the front row and both podiums in a fortnight’s time.



DUCATI MOTOE ON THE PACE

DUCATIS’ SUCCESS isn’t limited to MotoGP. Its foray into supplier for the new MotoE World Championship showed signs of instant success at a three-day test at Jerez, where Eric Granado (LCR) topped the standings with a 1m47.053s time, 0.4sec under the previous MotoE lap record. Matteo Ferrari (Gresini) was second and Nicolas Spinelli (Pons) third.

3

1. Bastianini came good at the death knell in Portugal **2.** ...but there's no doubt his teammate Bagnaia holds all the aces before Round 1 **3.** Aleix Espargaro was happy with his Aprilia, but will now be sweating on test results for a sore right arm **4.** Quartararo made giant strides on Sunday, and Bagnaia knows he's coming **5.** Oliveira and Vinales on the Aprilias **6.** The Joan and Jack talk show, as the Honda and KTM riders compare notes **7.** Marc Marquez's preseason has been torturous, but you just can't discount the multiple world champion **8.** Pol Espargaro on the GasGas

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APRILIA

Clearly the best of the rest at Sepang last month, Aprilia's fortunes were slightly more complicated here. Its four riders looked fast at certain moments across days one and two. But factory bosses will be nervously awaiting the results from Aleix Espargaro's (Aprilia Racing) medical checks on Monday morning after a suspected case of fibrosis in his right arm slowed the factory's testing program down.

A variety of different aero parts were brought, including winglets attached to the bike's front fork, and others bolted to the RS-GP's swingarm. Yet the full 2023 engine that was expected here won't be available until Round 1. Optimism on Saturday was dimmed slightly on Sunday by an engine-braking gremlin which slowed Maverick Viñales' race simulation. Yet both factory riders declared themselves "ready to race".

"I feel better here than Malaysia, sincerely," said Espargaro. Now to wait on his medical tests.

YAMAHA

The big story on Sunday. The outlook was bleak for the Iwata factory at the close of the first day. Quartararo had finally broached the top 10, but still found himself 0.8sec in arrears. What was of greater concern was his assessment of the new YZR-M1's behaviour. Asked what the greatest problem was, the 24-year old answered: "Everything. Not just the braking. I mean, corner speed, stability, exit of the corners. And also it's difficult how to use a new tyre."

Yet a crucial switch to last year's aero package at the beginning on Sunday led to immediate improvements. Suddenly the ex-champ was contesting the lead positions again, ending up just 0.3sec off the top. And a 12-lap sprint simulation had him contesting a hypothetical podium. With the greater top speed available, he believes he can fight in a pack, rather than be a sitting duck.

"I feel at one with the bike," he said. But it wasn't all rosy. Results made for grim reading for Franco Morbidelli in 19th.

KTM

A week before the test, KTM Sporting Director Pit Beirer asserted his men were well on track to fulfill lofty top-three expectations this year. But there was little evidence of that here. Rear grip remains the new RC16's supreme deficiency. It's a problem that affects all aspects of performance, particularly corner entry and exit.

"We're just missing a bit of natural grab from the rear tyre," explained Binder. "Already peeling into the corner, it wants to come around. And then you go for the gas but it's already slipping. You keep sliding the whole time."

There were signs of progress on Sunday as the South African set the ninth fastest time after a respectable sprint simulation. But progress was stunted by a huge Turn 7 get-off on Sunday afternoon. A black-eyed and probably concussed Binder later said: "This whole off-season has been a little bit tricky for us. Everything's new so we need to start figuring out where to start and which part is touching what we need."

Jack Miller improved his time on the final day by a full second to finish 17th.

HONDA

There can be no shying away from the predicament in which Honda currently finds itself. New parts – mainly a new chassis and some aerodynamics updates – were quickly discarded by Marquez. A new clutch, believed to aid engine braking, led to a series of practice starts the Catalan described as "dangerous". And throttle connection and power delivery were also issues across the two days, with Marquez and teammate Joan Mir the second and fourth slowest riders through the track's undulating final sector.

Yet once Marquez got down to the job of refining set-up on the final day, he wasn't a million miles away. Improving acceleration is a requisite. And the eight-time champion's stark assessment that Honda trailed Ducati to the tune of 0.5sec per lap at the close of day one was reflected in his sprint simulation on Sunday. But it's believed the 30-year old was holding something back late on. Bagnaia expects him to be challenging early in the season.

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WORLDSBK

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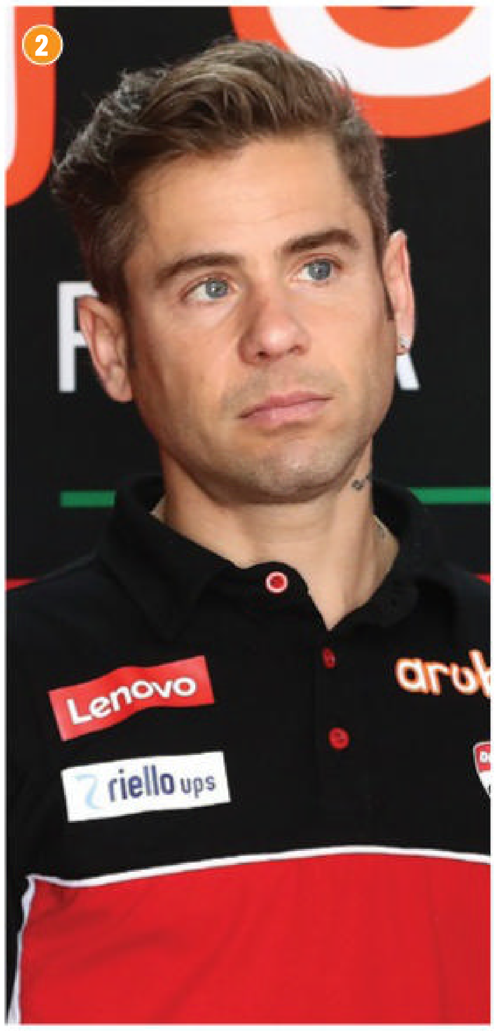
IMOLA COMPLETES WORLDSBK SCHEDULE

Controversial track confirmed as second Italian round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THE WORLDSBK championship kicked off at Phillip Island with only 11 of the 12 rounds confirmed, but just as the paddock was arriving in Mandalika for Round 2 the worst kept secret of the season was confirmed – the paddock's off to Imola again.

For some, Imola is as much a temple to motorcycle sport as Assen is. A unique parkland rollercoaster that is the Italian version of all those other magnificent old-school 'nature parks' like Laguna Seca, Brands Hatch and BSB's Cadwell Park. But for others Imola is anachronistic, too sketchy and just too much in 2023. The last time MotoGP raced at the circuit was way back in 1999.

The local authorities, which are in ultimate control as the underwriters and paymasters in many cases, were of the opinion that Imola was no longer suitable for motorcycle racing and have recently adopted a four-wheels-good, two-wheels-bad approach. Formula 1 returned to the circuit in 2021 after a 14-year hiatus. Bike racing was supposed to be exclusively for Misano, less than 100km further south down the A14 Autostrada.

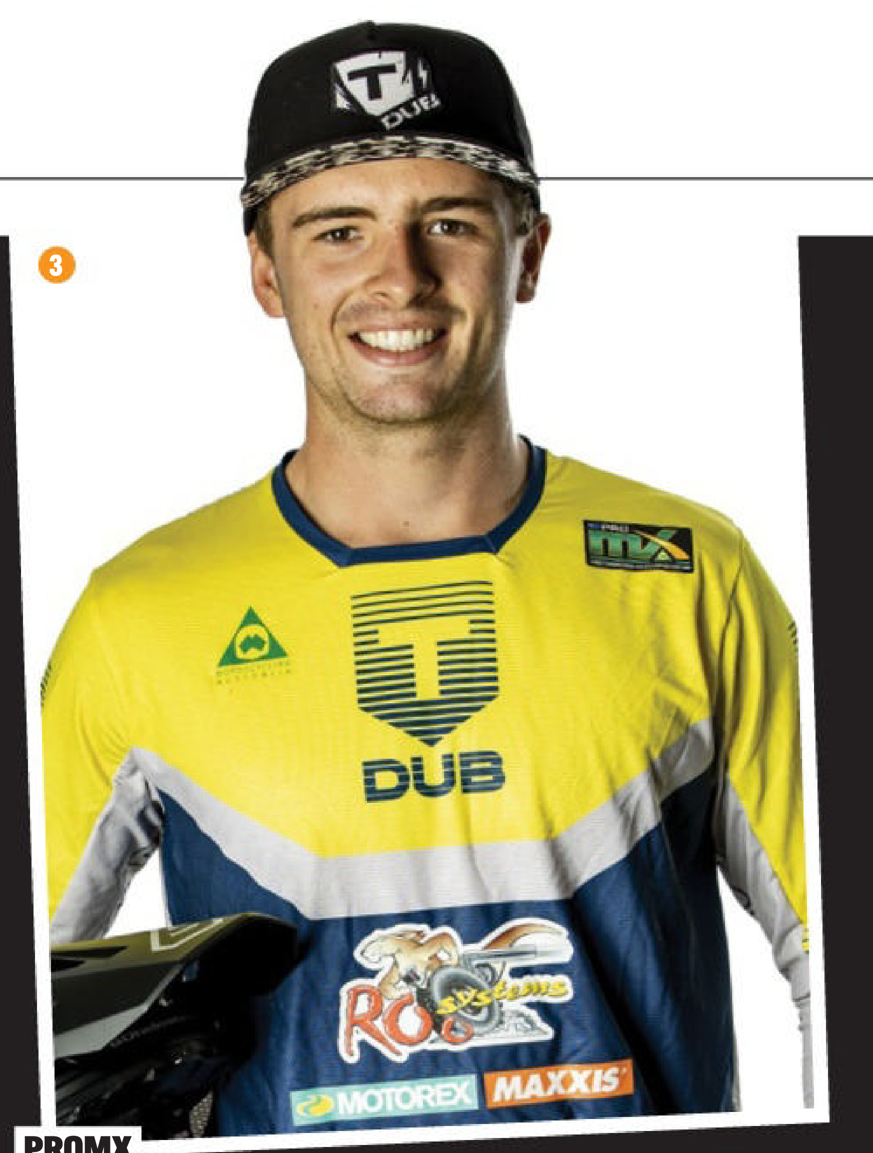
Alvaro Bautista, even though he rides for Ducati, and Imola is its true home circuit, was world champion enough to be completely honest in his appraisal of going back to Imola, saying it is dangerous in places, and he would rather not go. The track will no doubt be lined with airfence and other secondary safety aids, and there have been numerous safety improvements over the years – but it is without question on the edge for modern-day motorcycle racing.

Like Laguna Seca and Cadwell Park, however, it is also simply magnificent, a city track in a region of a country that is even more obsessed with racing and motorsport in general than most Italian regions. A true challenge to ride, Imola is a riders' circuit in every way. It's amazingly atmospheric for the fans and almost as undulating as Portimao.

The Italian round will form Round 7 of the 2023 WorldSBK Championship, the halfway point of what will surely be an intriguing season. A potential turning point, where luck might just favour the brave.

GORDON RITCHIE

1. The much maligned Imola is back on the WorldSBK calendar **2.** WorldSBK champ Alvaro Bautista isn't a big fan of the historic venue **3.** Vale Brayden Erbacher **4.** NSW sidecar speedway champs Jack Summerling and Nathan McFadden **5.** Price with this third-place Abu Dhabi medal **6.** Honda's rally hotshot, Adrien Van Beveren



PROMX

VALE BRAYDEN ERBACHER

THE OPENING round of the 2023 ProMX season was marred by tragedy when 20-year-old Brayden Erbacher was fatally injured in a crash during Race 1 of the MX2 category. Harking from Ipswich in Queensland, Erbacher was accompanied by his family in the opening round at Wonthaggi in Victoria, as he looked to make a strong start for what was set to be his first full MX2 campaign.

Erbacher was quickly transferred to the RaceSafe medical centre for treatment, while the MX2 race was restarted with Honda's Wilson Todd taking the win ahead of Nathan Crawford (KTM) and Jesse Dobson (Yamaha).

But as news filtered through the paddock that Erbacher had succumbed to his injuries, the round was cancelled, meaning the MX1 category was unable to race. Earlier in the day, Charli Cannon (Yamaha) won the women's category ahead of Taylor Thompson (Yamaha) and Emma Milesevic (Honda), while Heath Davy celebrated the win in the YZ65 Cup from Deegan Fort and Luis Cannon.

The Erbacher family issued a statement thanking the paramedics, Racesafe and other first responders.

"We are beyond proud to call Brayden our son and will be forever grateful for having him in our lives," it read. "He is our hero and will be greatly missed."

AMCN sends its condolences to Erbacher's family and friends. The series will resume at Appin for Round 2 on 19 March.

KEL BUCKLEY

SPEEDWAY

AUSSIES ON THE CHARGE

THE BRITISH speedway season will open this Sunday with a farewell meeting for English rider Stuart Robson at Redcar.

Highlights for Australians in the opening week will be a big contingent, headed by former winner Jason Doyle, contesting the Peter Craven Memorial Meeting at Belle Vue on 20 March, and then a testimonial meeting for Sam Masters at Wolverhampton on 26 March. **PB**

SPEEDWAY

SIDECARS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

SIDECARS HAVE taken over the domestic speedway spotlight with a number of state title meetings staged in the run to the Australian Sidecar Championship at the Pinjar Park track in Perth on the Easter weekend.

Perennial contender Darrin Treloar was a late withdrawal from the New South Wales championship in Tamworth, leaving first-time winners in Jack Summerling/Nathan McFadden, getting the better of Max Howse/Riley Commons, Rick Stephens/Nathan O'Brien and Shane Hudson/Adam Constable.

In Western Australia, Darren Nash/Ash Shield came out on top of Reece Liptrott/Jesse Thomas with Jeff Bishop/Daniel Bishop filling the third spot on the dais.

A fifth South Australian championship for Mark Plaisted/Ben Pitt moved them to second on the best all-time winners' list. They headed Tyler Moon/Adam Lovell with Nate Headland/Jaxon Rayner third and Mark Mitchell/Tony Carter fourth.

The Mildura season wrapped up with the Victorian championship where Warren Monson/Andrew Summerhayes won a record-breaking ninth title, beating Mick Headland/Brenton Kerr, Rick Stephens/Nick O'Brien and Damien Niesche/Mitch Spear.

PETER BAKER

WRRC

PRICE RISES

AFTER JUST missing out on the Dakar win, a third-place finish in the 2023 Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge (ADDC) has put Australia's Toby Price (KTM) at the top of the World Rally Raid Championship ladder as the Aussie looks to add a second world title to his 2018 crown.

After more than 17 hours of racing, the five-stage event was won by Honda's Adrien Van Beveren, who stood on the top step of the ADDC podium for the very first time by beating Luciano Benavides (Husqvarna) to the win the event by less than five minutes.

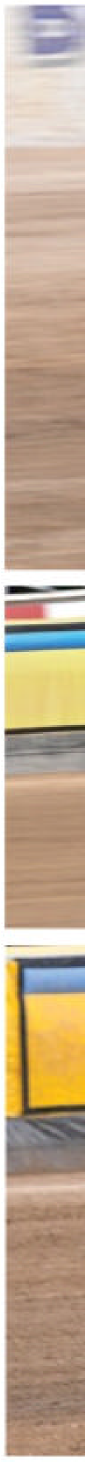
Despite Price digging deep to win the final stage, 2m30s clear of Jose Ignacio Cornejo (Honda), the 34-year-old only just made the podium, ending the rally just two seconds clear of Cornejo and less than a minute behind Benavides, the sibling of Dakar winner, Kevin Benavides.

"I had to push really hard today," Price said at the finish line. "Opening on the long Day 4 really knocked me back in the overall such were the conditions. I knew my only choice today was to push hard, and so I went as hard as I could possibly go for the whole 206km.

"To only just make the podium by two seconds is crazy. It shows the level of the riders at the moment in rally, with the results often coming down to seconds and not minutes - I think that's really good for the championship."

The championship now moves to Mexico for the week-long Sonora Rally which kicks off 24 April. **KB**

PANORAMA MOTORCYCLE CLUB



BIKES AT BATHURST!

Racers from around the nation descended on Bathurst Showground for the annual Long Track Masters

REPORT **PETER BAKER** + PHOTOGRAPHY **COL BOYD**

RACERS CAME from as far away as Adelaide and Townsville to the Bathurst Showground for what many look on as a 'must-do' meeting when the 2023 Long Track Masters meeting was staged on 4 March.

Fans also turned up in big numbers and, while some late afternoon rain delayed proceedings as extensive track work was needed, the post-rain excitement proved as good as there had been during the day and the 119-event program was completed, albeit later than originally planned.

The vast majority of races across all 15 classes of competition produced close racing, and if there was not a battle for the lead there was a battle somewhere near the front of the pack. Constant changing of positions was the norm and there were a number of races so close that the result was not obvious to the naked eye.

The quality of the entry list guaranteed victories were going to be hard to achieve and so it was with only three of the 2022 winners on top again, while only one rider managed to chalk up wins across two classes.

Corey Banks and passenger Tom Banks won the Dirt Track Sidecar class for the sixth consecutive Bathurst meeting, so that was no surprise, nor was local star Ben Grabham scoring an equally convincing win in the Over 40s category. But Kenny Angel repeating last year's win in the Hooligan Twins needed a countback for his Ducati to overcome Damian Bombardier's Norton.

HARRISON RYAN WAS THE ONLY DUAL-CLASS WINNER TAKING OUT BOTH THE PRO 450 AND BATHURST UNLIMITED CLASSES

Harrison Ryan was the only dual-class winner taking out both the Pro 450 and Bathurst Unlimited classes. To win the Pro 450 final, Ryan had to chase down and pass a rider double his age, edging out Grabham by 0.07sec, with James Sawdy third.

The finale to the program

1. Jack Morrison (#13), Michael Slade (#9) and Jason Stewart (#11) in the Slider class; Morris won the overall **2.** 13-U16 victor, Bodie Page **3.** Cody Lewis, the 250cc four-stroke winner **4.** The juniors get to work, led by the dominant Sam Drane (#7) **5.** Jared Brook in full flight **6.** Sam Drane gets some nice opposite lock **7.** Unlimited two-stroke winner, Damien Koppe **8.** A full women's grid **9.** Women's open winner, Briony Hendrickson **10.** Sidecar champs, Corey Banks and Tom Banks

CLUB ME!
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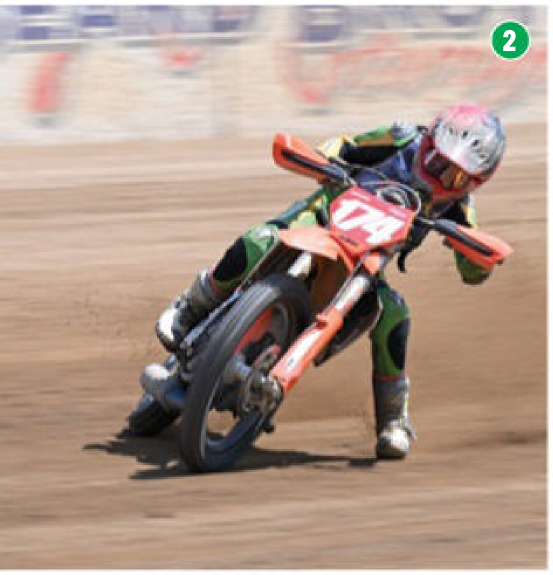

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31
DAMESA

was the Unlimited class final where Ryan again triumphed ahead of Damien Koppe, Jarred Brook and Grabham – all of whom have an extensive list of wins at Bathurst which they added to this year.

Koppe made the trip from Townsville worthwhile with victory in the Unlimited two-stroke class.

A class for Unlimited motocross-framed machines with 19-inch flat track wheels featured for the first time, and this proved a worthwhile innovation as it also produced consistently exciting action and close finishes. This provided Brook with his only class win of the 2023 meeting ahead of Thomas Herrick and Daniel Wicks in Division 1, while Kristin O'Donnell dominated the Division 2 action.

The Slider class saw a high attrition rate, but regardless of that the very impressive Victorian Jack Morrison was a deserving winner. His most serious rival loomed as Gunnedah rider Jordan Dall, but in the end he can be thankful for air fences being in use at Bathurst for the first time when he had an alarming spill while chasing Morrison in the final.

Rory Hutchinson was unbeaten in winning the 250cc two-stroke class, while Cody Lewis triumphed in the 250cc four-stroke class. Older machines were part of the program with class wins for Wicks (Pre 1990 machines) and Matthew Davies (Evolution Sliders).

The Women's class lived up to expectations with Briony Hendrickson emerging as the winner, while the two junior classes again showed fans that there is a rich vein of talent coming through the ranks with Sam Drane (9-U13) and Bodie Paige (13-U16) the deserving winners.

RESULTS

CLASS WINNERS: 2023 BATHURST LONG TRACK	
Pro 450	Harrison Ryan
Bathurst Unlimited	Harrison Ryan
250cc two-stroke	Rory Hutchinson
250cc four-stroke	Cody Lewis
Hooligan Twins	Kenny Angel
Unlimited two-stroke	Damien Koppe
Over 40s unlimited	Ben Grabham
Pre-1990 Classic	Daniel Wicks
Long Track	Jack Morrison
Evolution Long Track	Matt Davies
19-inch Division 1	Jarred Brook
19-inch Division 2	Tristin O'Donnell
Womens	Briony Hendrickson
Dirt track sidecar	Corey Banks / Tom Banks
Junior 125-250 13-U16	Bodie Paige
Junior 85-150 9-U13	Sam Drane

Full feature next issue! And it's a cracker!

INTERVIEW **ALAN CATHCART** + PHOTOGRAPHY **EMANUEL TSCHANN**

STEFAN PIERER

This extract from a full-length feature appearing next issue outlines the plans and thoughts from KTM's head honcho on the immediate racing futures of KTM, GasGas, CFMoto and MV Agusta

Will GasGas evolve into an on-road manufacturer?
For sure, yes.

Using the same model platforms as KTM?
It depends – this is a younger audience, remember, but we are only at the starting line. We tried it very fast with the LC4 platform, but maybe that was wrong because we are dominating that segment anyway – it's our home turf, and in creating more complexity you're competing against yourself. But for sure, sooner or later you will see a street-legal GasGas supermoto or nakedbike, and this brand will also enter the middleweight twin-cylinder class in the short term, too.

So was this the point of going Moto3 racing in 2022, and dominating it – it was a rather successful venture, with GasGas riders one-two in the championship?
Yes, very successful indeed, and now we push into Moto2 and MotoGP. The Spanish fans are very happy to have their own brand at the top level.

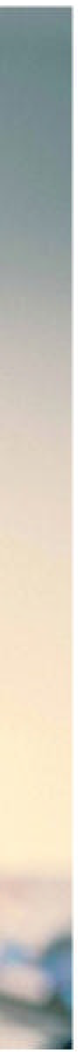
Why did you choose Aspar to run your Moto3 and Moto2 GasGas teams?
Because we've had a long relationship with him, and I would say there are a lot of sharks in the racing world, but he's one of the serious ones. He's the rare example of an ex-racer, an ex-world champion, who became good at business. We like him, he's very reliable, very trustworthy, and he's also integrated well into our big family – with the three brands, we are running it like a family. Each kid has his own character, but he's still guided by the parents.

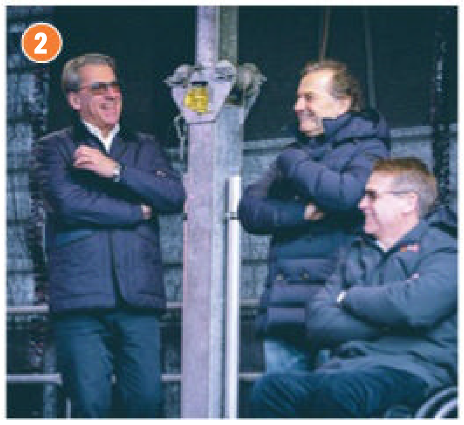
Well, there was a fourth brand in 2022, when CFMoto did Moto3 for the first time. Do you see it stepping up a level like GasGas?
Yes, we convinced them that they should join in to make a greater brand awareness. Moto3 is the cheapest way of doing this – in Moto2 it takes time, but it was a help, and now we are going to start handling their distribution in Europe in 2023, so maybe in two or three years' time they should start a Moto2 team.

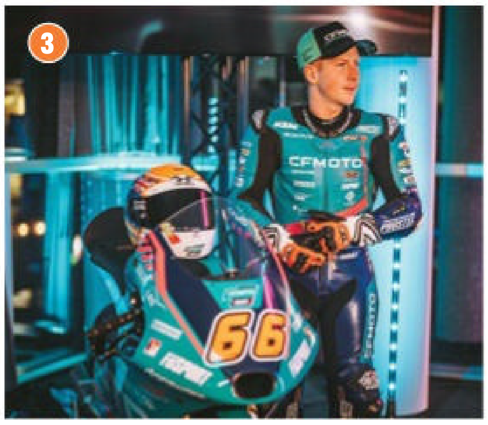
Are you focused on synthetic fuel?
Yes. In MotoGP we are going in 2024 to a blend of 40 percent synthetic with conventional race fuel, and in 2026 or 2027 it should go to 100 percent, like in Formula 1. Together we will save the planet – and have fun racing!

So that brings us to MotoGP, where you have a new KTM rider this year in Jack Miller, and a GasGas team as well as a KTM team. Is your biggest problem at the moment being competitive in qualifying? Come raceday, Brad Binder is certainly a Sunday guy, and Jack too, so is this the problem?
Basically, it's similar to Formula 1 in that you must have a qualifying bike and

1. Pierer at the 2019 MotoGP round in KTM's homeland, Austria **2.** Pierer, KTM board member Hubert Trunkenpolz and company motorsports boss Pit Bierer at the 2023 Dakar Rally-winning celebrations **3.** Aussie Joel Kelso, who will race a CFMoto in the 2023 Moto3 title **4.** KTM's big MotoGP signing: Jack Miller **5.** GasGas is joining the MotoGP ranks for the first time in 2023







a qualifying set up, then a racebike. For 2023 we think we're competitive, but let's see. Last year we underestimated the importance of aerodynamics, which became a key element in being competitive, but it's just increasing the costs. Fortunately we have a close relationship to Red Bull, so they helped us, and we managed to stop the introduction of that stupid idea of the movable ride height in races.

I sometimes get the impression that the Italian manufacturers want to use MotoGP only as a means of developing these crazy ideas that they have lying in bed at night into something that could maybe work on a motorcycle. Gigi Dall'Igna is a great guy, he's always finding new ideas, and what's not covered by the rules, oh, that's racing – so it's okay. I'm not complaining about his capacity for innovation, only about the constantly increasing costs they bring with them. Because, mark my words, sooner or later probably from 2027 onwards, for sure we will have to introduce cost controls. Look, Suzuki made a decision to retire from MotoGP on cost grounds with a race-winning bike, so don't underrate the importance of this.

“AND WE MANAGED TO STOP THE INTRODUCTION OF THAT STUPID IDEA OF THE MOVABLE RIDE HEIGHT IN RACES”

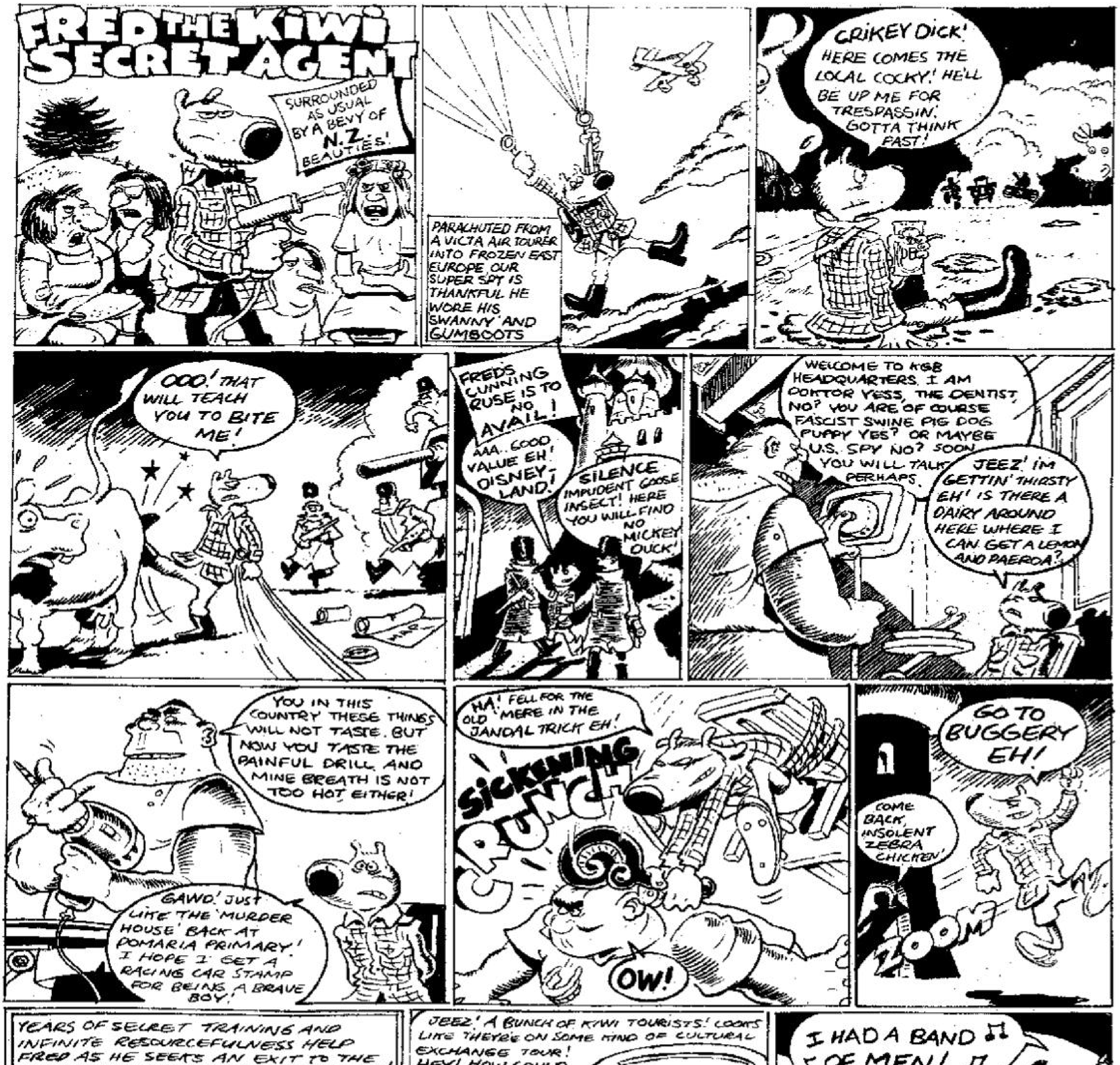
Do you feel the reason Suzuki withdrew was that it simply wasn't prepared to spend the extra money needed for aerodynamics?
Yes, but it's not only aerodynamics, it's everything. Let me tell you, you need at least a €70 million ($A112m) budget for two bikes for a single season, otherwise you're not competitive. And for Suzuki, not going racing was a strategic marketing decision based on value for the money they spent, which is quite understandable.

Looking at something quite different, is it true that KTM is developing a full-fairing RC890 twin-cylinder sportsbike as a 2024 model?
Yes, it's true. I think it will be launched around a year and a half from now, as a 2025 model.

Well, given that KTM's mantra is 'Ready to Race', will you go supersport racing with this bike?
It could happen, but first of all we must find out if it's competitive or not, because this is now a horsepower class where the rules are always changing. But finally, if it's possible, why not?! Because while right now we are focusing on MotoGP, and that's serious, we do want to come back to the customer racing segment with such bikes. So for example we were always participating in the 300 Supersport category, and now we want to come back to that segment more strongly – there were very few KTMs on the grid in this class last year because we stopped support from the factory, so it was just some dealer entries. But for next year, for model year 2024, we are bringing a whole new generation of our joint products from India. So all new engines, everything. For sure, there will be an all-new RC390, so get ready!

You recently acquired a 25 percent stake in MV Agusta. Do you believe that brand must go racing?
No – and especially not with a three-cylinder Triumph engine in its Moto2 bike!

How do you feel about Triumph, and also apparently Ducati going motocross racing against KTM and GasGas?
If you're a public company for many years, you have to report and release everything, so then our competitors start seeing what huge success we have, and say, let's follow them. Okay, let's see, I like competition! Their investing in that off-road market means it will expand as more people around the world become aware of it.


FRED THE KIWI SECRET AGENT
SURROUNDED AS USUAL BY A BEVY OF N.Z. BEAUTIES!
PARACHUTED FROM A VICTA AIR TOURER INTO FROZEN EAST EUROPE OUR SUPER SPY IS THANKFUL HE WORE HIS SWANNY AND GUMBOOTS
CRIKEY DICK! HERE COMES THE LOCAL COCKY! HE'LL BE UP ME FOR TRESPASSIN'. GOTTA THINK FAST!
OOO! THAT WILL TEACH YOU TO BITE ME!
FRED'S CUNNING RUSE IS TO NO AVAIL!
AAA.. GOOD VALUE EH! DISNEY-LAND!
SILENCE IMPUDENT GOOSE INSECT! HERE YOU WILL FIND NO MICKEY DUCK!
WELCOME TO KGB HEADQUARTERS. I AM DOKTOR YESS, THE DENTIST, NO? YOU ARE OF COURSE FASCIST SWINE PIG DOG PUPPY YES? OR MAYBE U.S. SPY NO? SOON YOU WILL TALK PERHAPS.
JEEZ! I'M GETTIN' THIRSTY EH! IS THERE A DAIRY AROUND HERE WHERE I CAN GET A LEMON AND PAEROA?
YOU IN THIS COUNTRY THESE THINGS WILL NOT TASTE. BUT NOW YOU TASTE THE PAINFUL DRILL. AND MINE BREATH IS NOT TOO HOT EITHER!
GAWD! JUST LIKE THE 'MURDER HOUSE' BACK AT POMARIA PRIMARY! I HOPE I GET A RACING CAR STAMP FOR BEING A BRAVE BOY.
HA! FELL FOR THE OLD 'MERE IN THE JANDAL TRICK EH!
SICKENING CRUNCH
OW!
GO TO BUGGERY EH!
COME BACK, INSOLENT ZEBRA CHICKEN!
ZOOM
YEARS OF SECRET TRAINING AND INFINITE RESOURCEFULNESS HELP FRED AS HE SEEKS AN EXIT TO THE FREE WORLD, AND FROM THERE, GODZONE!
BUSKY STOP
COME ON THE BUS!
JEEZ! A BUNCH OF KIWI TOURISTS! LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE ON SOME KIND OF CULTURAL EXCHANGE TOUR! HEY! HOW COULD YOU'SE MUGS AFFORD TO LEAVE TH COUNTRY!
I HAD A BAND ♫ OF MEN! ♫

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